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**JOINT HEARING TO REVIEW VIO-  
LENCE IN THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE**

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Y 4. P 84/10:103-20

Joint Hearing to Review Violence in... **EARINGS**

BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
CENSUS, STATISTICS AND POSTAL PERSONNEL  
AND THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
POSTAL OPERATIONS AND SERVICES  
OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON  
POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

AUGUST 5; OCTOBER 14 AND 19, 1993

**Serial No. 103-20**

Printed for the use of the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service



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<sup>1</sup> Resigned September 13, 1993.

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# JOINT HEARING TO REVIEW VIOLENCE IN THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 5, 1993

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, SUBCOMMITTEE ON CENSUS, STATISTICS AND POSTAL PERSONNEL, JOINTLY WITH SUBCOMMITTEE ON POSTAL OPERATIONS AND SERVICES, COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE,

*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:30 a.m., in room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Thomas C. Sawyer (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Members present from the Subcommittee on Census, Statistics and Postal Personnel: Representatives Sawyer, McCloskey, Wynn, and Petri.

Members present from the Subcommittee on Postal Operations and Services: Representatives Collins, Bishop, and Young.

Member also present: Representative Myers.

Mr. SAWYER. Let me say good morning to everybody and thank everyone for your attendance and patience. This is one of those times of year when the demands on all of us go in many different directions. This might not have been the most auspicious time, in procedural terms, to have this sort of hearing. However, the members of the subcommittees that are joining together in this hearing today have a clear sense of the concern that many people have expressed about the subject before us today; that is to review concerns about violence in the U.S. Postal Service.

I would particularly like to thank Congresswoman Barbara-Rose Collins for her valuable contributions in preparing for these hearings.

Since August 1983, virtually a decade ago, there have been at least 10 major incidents that resulted in the death or serious wounding of postal employees by their coworkers. These events have claimed the lives of some 34 employees.

This highlights the need to examine some of the factors that contribute to those kinds of events. We need to ask ourselves what role do stressful working conditions play as a causal or contributing factor in these kinds of events?

Is there a consistent and adequate response when threats of violence are reported?

Might there be procedures that are designed to ensure compliance with personnel rules which inadvertently protect employees who may well be a threat to others?

I hope we can explore answers to these questions, but in doing so, I want to emphasize that our purpose is not to focus on any of these particular events. Rather, what we are looking for are ways to achieve a safer and more productive work force that fosters dignity and respect among all employees.

There is often no single reason that any of us can point to, but we would hope that when we encounter these kinds of events that we can identify factors within the environment that we are able to control and to mitigate.

Let me just mention that there needs to be consistent and prompt response to disruptive circumstances within the workplace that can be identified. There is a need for swift, uniform procedures in the face of imminently threatened violence, whether it is within or outside the postal community.

Personnel need adequate training in safer procedures. Human relationships are part of that kind of training, and clearly, the move that has been begun from the highest levels of the U.S. Postal Service to give employees a stake, a meaningful voice in the outcome of a broad range of decisions I think is an important part of that.

In short, I take very seriously the effort that Postmaster General Runyon has made to transform what is probably no less than the culture of a workplace that is decades, if not centuries, old. That is no easy task. Clearly, from some of the reports that all of us have heard, it is a difficult job to have that kind of understanding penetrate so large an organization quickly. But that work is under way.

Let me just comment also that I can appreciate the effort to find common threads among incidents of this kind. However, I must share my concern that efforts to identify individuals who have a propensity to commit violent acts runs the risk of an inductive approach where you attempt to build the general case out of a very few instances that may not have the kind of validity that we would hope. It might be useful to know whether employees have similar characteristics, but clearly, that kind of profile can create inappropriate generalizations that may be unwarranted or unfair.

Let me also suggest that the profile that has been given to these events in the Postal Service are a real tribute to the effort that is being made in one of the largest and most complex workplaces anywhere in the world. We don't know enough about not only the workplace that we are talking about today, but large and complex organizations of many different kinds across this country.

My hope is that we can both learn from others and perhaps even more that others can learn from what we are undertaking here. The Nation is undergoing very substantial change. It is technological. It is demographic. It is cultural, and the Postal Service has experienced every single one of those changes.

That kind of change is always difficult, but I know that we are all ready to work with Mr. Runyon and Mr. Hunter to ensure that the place that they work in and manage is a safe and humane place.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Thomas Sawyer follows:]



PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS A. SAWYER, A CONGRESSMAN FROM THE  
STATE OF OHIO

Good morning. I want to thank everyone for attending our first joint hearing, with the Subcommittee on Postal Operations and Services, to review concerns about violence in the United States Postal Service. I want to thank my co-chair, Congresswoman Barbara-Rose Collins, for her valuable contributions in preparing for these hearings.

Since August, 1983, there have been ten incidents that resulted in the death or serious wounding of postal employees by their coworkers. These tragic events have claimed the lives of 34 employees (including the assailant, in some cases).

These unsettling numbers highlight the need to examine the factors that contribute to violence in the postal workplace.

What role do stressful working conditions play as a causal factor contributing to violence in the Postal Service?

Is there a consistent and adequate response when threats of violence are reported?

Might procedures designed to ensure compliance with personnel rules inadvertently protect employees who are a threat to others?

I hope that we can explore the answers to these questions and others during our hearings.

It is not our purpose today to focus attention on any one particular tragedy that has occurred. Rather, I hope that our review can help the Postal Service achieve a safer and more productive work environment that fosters dignity and respect among all employees, by addressing a broad range of factors that might contribute to unsafe conditions.

There often is no single reason that causes a postal employee to engage in acts of violence against his or her coworkers. But, clearly, there are factors that are within the Postal Service's ability to control and mitigate.

For example, there must be a uniform and swift response by the Postal Inspection Service and postal managers when there is a threat of violence, whether that threat is from within or outside the postal community. There must be adequate training in security procedures for the designated official at each postal facility. The Postal Service must give the highest priority to cultivating human relations skills among its managers, and to ensuring that employees at all levels have a stake in the success of the agency, by giving them a meaningful voice in the decisionmaking process.

Postmaster General Runyon has stated on many occasions that he is making an effort to transform the Postal Service's management style from a paramilitary operation to a team-oriented approach that puts customer service above all. I believe that his actions are serious. However, reports that the subcommittee has heard from employees across the country make it clear that more needs to be done to convey that message down to the local level.

I also want to comment briefly on the Postal Service's effort to find common threads among the tragic shooting incidents. Many observers share my concern about the Postal Inspection Service study designed to identify individuals who have a propensity to commit violent acts. It might be useful to know whether employees who commit acts of violence have similar characteristics. But that kind of profile can lead to dangerous generalizations that are unwarranted and unfair. I want to caution the Postal Service above using its findings to single out any one group of employees as a potential threat.

I stand ready to work with Mr. Runyon and Mr. Hunter to ensure that the Postal Service is a safe and humane place to work.

Mr. SAWYER. Let me turn to my ranking member, Mr. Petri.

Mr. PETRI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I first would like to commend you for scheduling the hearing today on this very important subject. We are all aware that there have been a number of instances of violence involving postal workers, enough so that it is something that we need to be concerned about and do whatever we can to prevent it from occurring in the future.

So I am happy we are looking into the pattern of violence that has occurred, and I really do welcome the opportunity to hear from Postmaster General Runyon and will listen with great interest to his testimony and his recommendations and any suggestions that

he might have that we, working with the postal authorities, can do to reduce the violence and eliminate the violence that has occurred.

Thank you very much for being here today.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you.

Miss Collins.

Miss COLLINS. First of all, I would like to thank my distinguished colleague, Congressman Tom Sawyer, for cochairing this most important hearing today.

Second, I would like to thank all of you for attending this first joint hearing of the Postal Operations and Services Subcommittee and Census, Statistics, and Postal Personnel Subcommittee, to examine the problem of violence toward postal employees.

I understand that during 1992, there were approximately 500 incidents of attacks or threats against postal employees. In the last 10 years, 34 individuals have been actually killed and 20 wounded in post office-related shootings. This violence is a cancer on our society and it must be eliminated.

As a result of previous hearings relative to this problem, the full Committee on Post Office and Civil Service made extensive recommendations and suggestions to assist the Postal Service in dealing with this matter.

I trust that this joint hearing will explore the rationale of the Postal Service's decision not to implement these suggestions and recommendations.

I also hope that this joint hearing will be beneficial in helping us to determine if adequate training or additional upgrading of postal inspector training needs to be reevaluated.

I would be very interested in knowing how postal inspectors decide priority status for investigative purposes.

What is the determining factor as to when drug stings investigations will take precedence over the protection of postal workers against violence?

Clearly violence must never be tolerated in any setting. However, as members of the congressional Post Office and Civil Service Committee, it is our duty and responsibility to closely examine and determine exactly what is causing the increased attacks on postal workers and to try to find solutions that will eliminate this senseless violence.

Again, I thank you Chairman Sawyer and our invited guests. I am looking forward to a very informative joint hearing today.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Barbara-Rose Collins follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. BARBARA-ROSE COLLINS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN  
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

Good morning.

First, I would like to thank my distinguished colleague, Congressman Tom Sawyer, for cochairing this post important hearing today.

Secondly, I wish to thank all of you for attending this first joint hearing of the Postal Operations and Services Subcommittee and Census, Statistics, and Postal Personnel Subcommittee, to examine the problem of violence toward postal employees.

I understand that during 1992, there were approximately 500 incidents of attacks or threats against postal employees. In the last 10 years, 34 individuals have been actually killed and 20 wounded in post office-related shootings. This violence is a cancer on our society and it must be eliminated.

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Clearly violence must never be tolerated in any setting. However, as members of the Congressional Post Office and Civil Service full Committee, it is our duty and responsibility to closely examine and determine what is causing the increased attacks on postal workers and find solutions that will eliminate this senseless violence.

Again, thank you Cochair Sawyer and invited guest. I am looking forward to an informative joint hearing today.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much.

Mr. Myers.

Mr. MYERS. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I join our colleagues in thanking you and Mr. Petri, a member of this subcommittee, for holding this hearing and General Runyon, and Inspector Hunter and Vice President Mahon for being witnesses today. We all recognize that there is something wrong, but I am sure we stand—all Members of Congress, especially this committee—ready to help you alleviate, to make the workplace a safe place to work, and we all stand ready to help you in whatever it takes.

I have a prepared statement. In order to save time, I will just put it in the record at this point, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SAWYER. Without objection.

[The prepared statement of Hon. John T. Myers follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN T. MYERS, A CONGRESSMAN FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA

Thank you, Chairman Sawyer and Chairwoman Collins, for scheduling this hearing on violence in the U.S. Postal Service. No part of society is immune from violence, however, there continues to be a high level of stress in the Postal Service which has erupted in several violent acts during the last several years.

Workplace stress and efforts to prevent workplace violence should be a continuous focus for Postal officials throughout the country. Indeed, I am pleased to know that Postmaster General Marvin Runyon has instructed Postal inspectors to enter all threats into a data base and to consider any threat serious since the shooting incident at the Royal Oak, Michigan facility in November, 1991.

I welcome the testimony of General Runyon and the input of both Joe Mahon, Vice President for Labor Relations, and Ken Hunter, the Chief Postal Inspector. I hope that this hearing proves helpful in gaining more insight into the causes of stress and violence in the Postal Service.

Mr. SAWYER. Mr. McCloskey.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to commend you and Chairwoman Collins for conducting these hearings, and, of course, welcome Mr. Runyon. I think I have a fairly significant formal statement, but in the interest of time, I would like to hear from Mr. Runyon, and if I could request permission to just submit it for the record.

Mr. SAWYER. Without objection.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Frank McCloskey follows:]



PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK McCLOSKEY, A CONGRESSMAN FROM THE  
STATE OF INDIANA

From Norman, Oklahoma, to Royal Oak, Michigan, to Escondido, California, there have been entirely too many incidences of postal employees going on violent rampages after coworkers. As the former chairman of the Postal Personnel Subcommittee and Postal Operations Subcommittee, I investigated many of these tragedies. While individual acts of these disturbed individuals cannot be excused, there has been increasing concern that something is fundamentally flawed with the system. No other large company over the past 10 years, appears to have these types of violent occurrences. Change is necessary within the postal structure. Today's hearing will highlight some of the changes that the Postal Service is implementing. Hopefully these actions will put an end to the carnage.

I want to commend Chairman Sawyer and Chair Collins for their initiative and concern in conducting these hearings on violence in the workplace. Having been responsible for oversight in both the postal personnel and operations sides I realize how important this work is toward maintaining a reliable and efficient postal system that ensures the safety and well-being of its employees.

I am pleased to note that finally after 8 years of working on postal oversight, the Postal Service may finally be moving in a positive direction as it attempts to identify managers who lack human relationship skills and sensitivity. By implementing the 360-degree feedback survey and requiring that it be a significant factor of one's performance rating, the Postal Service will send a message to managers that indifference toward employees will not be tolerated.

I hope that once these managers have been critiqued and identified, they will be moved out of direct employee management and into areas that do not require the supervision of employees, if it is found that they are incapable of changing their attitudes. As I have stated numerous times previously, the Postal Service dealt with these individuals in the past by promoting them up but not out of the organization. In order to improve labor-management relations, the bad apples must be removed and employees need to know that they will be treated with respect and dignity. I urge the Postal Service to move quickly to implement these surveys in the field.

Improving the postal culture is not the only key to ending violent incidents in the workplace, but is a giant step forward toward trying to stem further violence. Obviously, human nature being as complex as it is, no one can totally ensure that violence will never again occur in the post office.

Improved screening of job applicants and enhanced procedures to deal with threats and safety are also important endeavors.

Mr. Runyon discusses in his statement a few initiatives the Postal Service is implementing to screen applicants which include updated training for personnel officers, fingerprinting of all new hires, including noncareer employees, and awarding a contract to a firm to gather criminal records and employment history. These all appear to be positive steps and I am particularly interested in obtaining further information about this new contract.

In regard to safety procedures, I am concerned about what has occurred at individual facilities. The Postmaster General discusses improvements in how the postal inspection service handles threats and potentially violent situations. However, nothing has been mentioned about implementing procedures at individual facilities if an incident of violence occurs. In past incidences, employees were wounded or killed because they were unable to leave the facility.

Once again, I commend my colleagues, Mr. Sawyer and Miss Collins, for their hard work on these complex issues and I look forward to hearing from our panel of postal officials. I hope that the need for these type of oversight hearings will diminish.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Just one or two very brief comments.

Again, good to see you, Mr. Runyon. I would be very interested in your testimony as to the realities of what you are doing with the problem of abuse of managers. We have gone on and on about this for years, particularly with Tony Frank, as you know, talking about the authoritarian attitudes in the workplace, and I can just tell you from my own experience, you still have people in major management positions that no amount of Dale Carnegie or charm school treatment is going to change into nice people.

They go on and on, in essence getting moved, hardly ever reprimanded. I am not going to go on about any one person in particu-

lar, but I can document it. Also having read your statement previously, I don't think you mentioned as to whether there is any actual implementation of safety and evacuation procedures in each workplace, and I would be very interested in some discussion to learn about it.

So I thank you, Mr. Runyon and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much, Frank.

Just let me say again Barbara-Rose, I don't think you had arrived yet when I mentioned how much I appreciate your help in putting these hearings together. You and your staff have made this possible.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you.

Mr. SAWYER. I understand we are working under some time constraints, so let me again say I appreciate your patience and welcome our witnesses this morning. They are the Honorable Marvin Runyon, Postmaster General, U.S. Postal Service. Mr. Runyon is accompanied today by Kenneth J. Hunter, chief postal inspector; and Joseph Mahon, Jr., vice president, labor relations.

Gentlemen, welcome.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARVIN RUNYON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND POSTMASTER GENERAL, U.S. POSTAL SERVICE, ACCOMPANIED BY KENNETH J. HUNTER, CHIEF POSTAL INSPECTOR, AND JOSEPH J. MAHON, VICE PRESIDENT FOR LABOR RELATIONS**

Mr. RUNYON. Thank you.

Chairman Sawyer, Chairwoman Collins and members of the subcommittees, we thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. As you mentioned, with me today are Joe Mahon, our vice president for Labor Relations, and Ken Hunter, our chief postal inspector.

Both of these individuals have been active with our union and management associations in a joint task force formed to address stress, violence, and appropriate behavior in the workplace. Both serve in key management functions with specific relevance to today's hearing.

I have a brief statement, which I would like to make, and then all three of us are prepared to respond to your specific questions.

Violence in the workplace is one of the most complex, vexing, and frustrating problems facing American employers today. I want to assure you that we are working on the problem in the Postal Service. There may never be a complete solution to the problem of violence, but I believe that we can be in the forefront of efforts to remove stress and tension from the workplace.

I would also like to put the occurrences of violence in the Postal Service in a more accurate perspective. The Postal Service is the Nation's largest civilian employer, and we have not been immune to violence. Whether fairly or not, the media images of postal tragedies have caused us to be closely identified with the issue.

A truer picture of violence in the workplace would reflect that instances of homicide in the Postal Service, though highly visible when they occur, are occurring at a rate less than that of business or society in general. Among all employers, workplace violence is the fastest growing crime being tracked by the FBI.

According to the National Institute of Safety and Health, violence is the second highest cause of on-the-job deaths among males, and it is the leading cause of death on the job among females.

American industry is as troubled about the problem as we are, and several major companies have contacted the Postal Inspection Service to discuss our experiences and response to the problem of workplace violence. This national interest is one reason that I stated my intent to organize a symposium of business, professional and academic people to discuss every aspect of this problem.

Some of you may have seen the recent article entitled "The Best Defense Against Workplace Violence" in the Wall Street Journal. For the benefit of those members who didn't, I will submit a copy for the record.

The article was written by Dennis L. Johnson, a management consultant from Florida, and it contained research from the National Safe Workplace Institute in Chicago. I found this article to be illuminating.

It noted that the increase in employee violence in our Nation reflects the attitudes of our changing society. It quoted figures from the Centers for Disease Control indicating that at least 750 workplace homicides took place in 1992 nationwide.

The author suggests that coping with problems and pressures of work was easier in the past because family, community, and long-time employment were stabilizing qualities in American life. Today, however, these stresses can be more difficult to handle.

The balance of the article dealt with what companies are doing to reduce workplace violence. In the Postal Service, we are sensitized to the issues, and we are deploying strategies consistent with those of our private and public sector counterparts.

For example, following a number of violent incidents, IBM has developed threat assessment teams. They include employees from human resources, security, health and safety, and legal departments. These individuals evaluate threats and decide when to involve local law enforcement.

This is an area in which the full committee recommended that we do more following the Royal Oak tragedy, and we have done more.

Postal inspectors are instructed to enter all threats into our data base, and they take all threats seriously. Depending on the circumstances, one or more inspectors will interview the individual making the threat. Often, management discussion of appropriate behavior in the workplace is adequate to resolve the problem.

Since the Royal Oak incident, the amount of time the Inspection Service has devoted to threats and assaults has doubled. Protection of employees and prevention of violence have been reemphasized in the training of inspectors. Management of the Inspection Service has consulted behavioral scientists about workplace violence prevention.

The Inspection Service also maintains a 24-hour hotline through which employees can report threats or other concerns about their safety. It is analyzing assaults and threats, and it hopes to identify some common factors that might serve as early warning signs that we need to intervene to provide assistance to an employee or to prevent violence. This analysis has been widely publicized as a se-



cret study and psychological profile, but in fact, it is neither. We are attempting to learn more about violent incidents, and when we have completed the study we plan to consult with behavioral scientists for evaluation and advice.

I mentioned that we have a national task force on workplace violence made up of management and the leadership of our unions and management associations. We have agreed that violence, threats, and harassment are unacceptable behavior. We are committed to treating every employee with respect and dignity and the committee is developing a plan for assessing the work environment and intervening in specific locations where stress or tensions are high.

In addition to these activities, we have conducted employee focus groups throughout the country. These have given employees and their representatives the opportunity to discuss the recent shootings, their local working climate, their concerns about security, and their ideas for preventing future violence. These focus groups were conducted with the help of professional counselors.

The point is that we have taken very proactive steps to analyze, deal with, and to the degree possible, resolve issues before threats or assaults occur.

Prevention planning during downsizing is another strategy that we and other firms have deployed. Poor planning and communication about layoffs, for example, were cited in the Wall Street Journal as a cause of a major brawl at the Mare Island Shipyards.

During our restructuring, we communicated our plans and gave employees 30-, 60-, and 120-day reports on our progress. We didn't resort to layoffs and we provided professional career guidance to employees not initially placed in the new structure.

A final group of workplace violence strategies includes improved preemployment screening, training for supervisors and managers, and enhancements to employee assistance programs. The Postal Service has been active in each of these areas.

We have conducted updated training in all of our personnel offices to assure that our people understand how to properly screen applicant information and correctly interpret it. We have also created standard operating procedures and management checklists to assure compliance with appropriate hiring procedures.

We are about to competitively award a nationwide contract to an outside firm which will gather required criminal records, employment history, and where appropriate, driving records of applicants. The use of outside expertise in this area will give us immediate access to automated information networks with established quality control procedures. This will free up our human resources people to make qualitative hiring decisions, and we believe it will improve the quality of our hiring process. We expect to award this contract in a few weeks and to implement the contract systemwide by the end of the calendar year.

We will extend fingerprinting of new hires to include noncareer selections this month. These services will be provided by the Office of Personnel Management and will give us access to additional background information, including an FBI criminal record search. We have visited the National Military Records Center in St. Louis

to explore ways to provide better and faster service to our field installations in making hiring decisions.

We are also expanding our Employee Assistance Program [EAP] so that it deals with problems other than substance abuse. Professional counselors in the EAP network are more numerous and better qualified than in the past. Supervisors, managers, and union officials will have access to the network for individual or unit consultation, and they will receive training in recognizing and referring individuals to the program. These services are also available to the employees' family members also.

We are working with our major unions to develop procedures for joint referrals and support for employees with a wide range of problems affecting their work.

I believe that the Postal Service has responded thoroughly and purposefully to both the needs arising for past tragedies and the need to prevent violence of any kind in the future.

Equally important, we are also taking affirmative steps to change our work environment. We are improving communication, commitment, and cooperation among managers, supervisors, employees, and the leadership of our employee organizations.

Starting at the top, we have brought our unions and management associations into our weekly senior leadership meetings. We are working with them to develop the same type of meetings in all of our major facilities across the country.

Last year, we completed an all-employee opinion survey to measure factors important to employee commitment. This month, we will repeat the survey and compare the results as one way to measure how we are doing. Managers and supervisors will be accountable for improving these results, and doing so represents one-third of their goals and performance appraisal.

Our top 550 executives, including me, are being measured this year through a new process that we call 360-degree feedback. The management styles of these executives will be assessed by their bosses, peers, and employees. Executives with strong people skills will move on in their careers. Executives with poor people skills will receive training and will not be promoted until these skills are improved.

This new evaluation system will soon cascade down to every manager and supervisor. It is an innovative and exciting driver of cultural change that will move us forward in the years ahead and lead to breakthrough performance toward our goals.

In conclusion, I believe that much has been accomplished in the Postal Service over the past year to respond to the concerns of the committee and your subcommittees. We are taking action to assure that our security, treatment of individuals, and management climate are conducive to deterring violence. Much work is still ahead of us, and I acknowledge that the Postal Service does not have all the answers.

So, we appreciate your interest, guidance, and assistance as we join others in government and industry in seeking solutions to workplace violence.

On that score, I would like to thank Chairwoman Collins for her introduction of legislation to prevent the stalking of Federal officers and employees. This legislation incorporates many features that we

have asked for in past testimony to the Congress. It includes criminal sanctions for threatening behavior, and appropriate counseling of individuals who are granted probation.

This approach may not be a panacea, but we believe that it will significantly strengthen the ability of legislative and executive agencies and their employees to respond to the threat of stalkers.

Thank you very much. That concludes my statement.

[The prepared statement of Postmaster General Runyon follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF POSTMASTER GENERAL RUNYON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER AND POSTMASTER GENERAL, U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

Chairman Sawyer, Chairwoman Collins, members of the subcommittees, thank you for the opportunity to appear today. With me today are Joe Mahon, our Vice President for Labor Relations, and Ken Hunter, our Chief Postal Inspector.

Both of these individuals have been active with our union and management associations in a joint task formed to address stress, violence, and appropriate behavior in the workplace. Both serve in key management functions with specific relevance to today's hearing.

I have a brief statement, which I would like to make for the record. All three of us are prepared to respond to your specific questions.

Violence in the workplace is one of the most complex, vexing, and frustrating problems facing American employers today. I want to assure you that we are working on the problem in the Postal Service. There may never be a complete solution to the problem of violence, but I believe that we can be in the forefront of efforts to remove stresses and tensions from the workplace.

I also would like to put the occurrences of violence in the Postal Service into a more accurate perspective. The Postal Service is the nation's largest civilian employer, and we have not been immune to violence. Whether fairly or not, the media images of postal tragedies have caused us to be closely identified with the issue.

A truer picture of violence in the workplace would reflect that incidents of homicide in the Postal Service—though highly visible when they occur—are not occurring at a rate disproportionate to the experience of either business or society in general. Among all employers, workplace violence is the fastest growing crime being tracked by the FBI.

According to the National Institute of Safety and Health, violence is the second highest cause of on the job deaths among males, and it is the leading cause of death on the job among females.

American history is as troubled about the problem as we are, and several major companies have contacted the Postal Inspection Service to discuss our experiences and response to the problem of workplace violence. This national interest is one reason that I have stated my intent to organize a symposium of business, professional, and academic people to discuss every aspect of the problem.

Some of you have seen the article titled "The Best Defense Against Workplace Violence" in the July 19 edition of The Wall Street Journal. For the benefit of those members who did not, I will submit a copy for the record.

The article was written by Dennis L. Johnson, a management consultant from Florida, who was supported by research and guidance provided by Joseph A. Kinney, the director of the National Safe Workplace Institute in Chicago. I found this article to be illuminating.

It noted that the increase in employee violence in our nation reflects the attitudes of our changing society. It quoted figures from the Centers for Disease Control indicating at least 750 workplace homicides in 1992 nationwide.

The author suggests that copying with constraints and pressures of office life was easier in the past because family, community, and long-time employment were stable and enduring qualities of American life. Today, however, these stresses can be more difficult to handle.

The balance of the article dealt with what companies are doing to reduce workplace violence. In the Postal Service, we are sensitized to the issues and are deploying strategies consistent with those of our private and public sector counterparts.

For example, following a number of violent incidents, IBM has developed threat assessment teams, which include employees from human resources, security, health and safety, and legal departments. These individuals evaluate threats and decide when to involve local law enforcement.

This is an area in which the full Committee recommended that we do more following the Royal Oak, Michigan, tragedies. We have done more.



Postal inspectors are instructed to enter all threats into our data base, and they take all threats seriously. Depending on the circumstances, one or more inspectors will interview the individual making the threat. Often, management discussion of appropriate behavior in the workplace is adequate to resolve the problem.

Since the Royal Oak incident, the amount of time the Inspection Service has devoted to threats and assaults has doubled. Protection of employees and prevention of violence have been reemphasized in training inspectors. Management of the Inspection Service has consulted behavioral scientists and has attended academies on workplace violence prevention.

The Inspection Service also maintains a 24-hour hot line through which employees can report threats or their concerns about their safety. It is analyzing assaults and threats and hopes to identify some common factors that might serve as early indicators that managers, professionals, or inspectors need to intervene to provide assistance to an employee or to prevent violence. This analysis has been widely publicized as a "secret study" and "psychological profile," but in fact, it is neither. We are attempting to learn more about violent incidents, and when we have completed the study, we plan to consult with behavioral scientists for evaluation and advice.

I mentioned that we have a national task force on workplace violence, which has involved management and the leadership of our unions and management associations. We have agreed that violence, threats, and harassment are unacceptable behavior. We have committed to treating every employee with dignity and respect. And, the committee is developing a plan for assessing the work environment and intervening in specific locations where stresses or tensions are high.

In addition to these activities, we have conducted employee focus groups throughout the country to give employees and their representatives the opportunity to discuss the recent shootings, their local working climate, their concerns about security, and their ideas for preventing future violence. These focus groups were conducted with the help of professional counselors.

The point is that we have taken very proactive steps to analyze, deal with, and—to the degree possible—resolve issues before threats or assaults occur.

Prevention planning during downsizing is another strategy that we and other firms have deployed. Poor planning and communication about layoffs, for example, was cited in the Wall Street Journal as the cause of a major brawl at the Mare Island Shipyards.

During our recent restructuring, we announced and communicated our plans and gave employees 30-, 60-, and 120-day reports on our progress. We did not resort to layoffs. We provided professional career guidance to employees not initially placed in the new structure.

A final group of workplace violence strategies being deployed by companies includes improved pre-employment screening, training for supervisors and managers, and enhancements to employee assistance programs. A Wisconsin public utility took many of these steps after one of its employees killed a fellow worker. The Postal Service has been active in each of these areas.

We have conducted updated training in all of our personnel offices to assure that our people understand how to properly screen applicant information and correctly interpret it. We also have created standard operating procedures and management checklists to assure compliance with appropriate hiring procedures.

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I believe that the Postal Service has responded thoroughly and purposefully to both the needs arising from past tragedies and to the need to prevent violence—of any kind—in the future.

Equally important, we also are taking affirmative steps to change our work environment and to improve communication, commitment, and cooperation among managers, supervisors, employees, and the leadership of our employee organizations.

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In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, I believe that much has been accomplished in the Postal Service over the past year to respond to the concerns of the Committee and of your Subcommittees. We are taking action to assure that our security, treatment of individuals and management climate are conducive to deterring violence. Much work is still ahead of us, and I acknowledge that the Postal Service does not have all of the answers.

So, we appreciate your interest, guidance, and assistance as we join others in government and industry seeking solutions to workplace violence.

On that score, I would like to thank Chairwoman Collins for her introduction of legislation to prohibit the stalking of federal officers and employees. This legislation incorporates many features that we have asked for in past testimony to the Congress, including criminal sanctions for threatening behavior; appropriate counseling of individuals who are granted probation; and allowing victims of stalking to seek relief in the civil courts. This approach may not be a panacea, but we believe it will significantly strengthen the ability of legislative and executive agencies and their employees to respond to the threat of stalkers.

Thank you. That concludes my statement.

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[From the Wall Street Journal, July 19, 1993]

#### THE BEST DEFENSE AGAINST WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

(By Dennis L. Johnson)

In recent months, our TV screens have been saturated with reports of workplace violence. Violence once thought to be limited primarily to the inner city increasingly has found its way into the offices and corridors of fashionable, upscale office buildings. Murder is now a major workplace health problem. According to the Centers for Disease Control, there were more than 750 workplace homicides in 1992. Last September, the CDC declared workplace homicide an epidemic.

But murder is merely the tip of the employee violence iceberg. For every murder, there are scores of injuries, beatings, stabbings, suicides, shootings, rapes, near-suicides, psychological traumas, and mental health problems. From an economic perspective, violence disrupts productivity and costs businesses millions of dollars. Violence contributes to or is a part of workplace drug and alcohol abuse, absenteeism, and many other factors that impede business operations and hurt productivity.

Unless managers begin to address this problem, the courts and regulatory system will intervene. In fact, a Florida court of appeals has now ruled that Circle K Corp. can be held liable for failing to take action that might have prevented the murder of a 27-year-old clerk by a robber. And CDC epidemiologists and federal regulators are exploring ways to expand government enforcement. These experts believe that many workplace murders are preventable and, as a consequence, constitute possible

violations of the "general duty clause" of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970.

The increase in employee violence reflects both a stressed-out, downsized business environment and a changing society. Of course, we have long been subjected to the constraints and pressures of office life: deadline pressures; conflicting styles of management; office politics; a system of values that favors less substantive societal members (e.g. actors, athletes, and rock musicians) at the expense of more productive ones (scientists, line managers, and teachers). Coping with that stress was made easier in the past because of certain stable and enduring factors in the lives of most of us (family, neighbors, life-time employment, etc.).

However, the bedrock of society, which once could be counted on as stable and enduring, has been shifting under our feet. For those who have lost their footing entirely, the stress of office life can become too much to handle, causing severe reactions: Women tend to become depressed and seek counseling, while men are more likely to become aggressive and, possibly, violent.

There are a number of steps that employers can take to reduce workplace violence. A few effective strategies include:

*Threat assessment teams.* After a number of violent incidents, IBM developed such teams. When a threat is made, staffers from the human resources, security, health-and-safety and legal departments convene to evaluate the problem, including the critical decision on when to notify law enforcement agencies. Since adopting this strategy, IBM has been able to reduce the severity of such incidents significantly.

*Training for supervisors and managers.* Supervisors and managers who know how to recognize aggressive behavior and mitigate its effects form a crucial front-line defense. Training includes how to recognize and respond to at-risk employees; conflict resolution and mediation; communication, and protocols for referring employees to suitable counselors.

*Behavioral screening.* Many companies already evaluate applicants for "goodness of fit" to the job being sought. The use of such assessments can be expanded to include current employees in a nonpunitive behavioral observation system. Example: Morale at a public utility in the Southeast dropped at the same time that substance abuse rose. Tests were given to 1,000 employees, and 154 were subsequently referred for interviews with licensed psychologists. Of that number, three required extensive treatment and were placed on paid leave. The others received professional help while continuing to work.

*Prevention planning when downsizing.* Since job losses trigger so much workplace violence, companies planning workforce reductions must be more sensitive to the needs of those who will be affected. This means giving workers as much advance notice as possible, handling layoffs fairly and providing reasonable severance benefits if feasible. If downsizing is mishandled, the potential exists for both guilt among survivors and anger among the terminated.

At Mare Island Naval Base in California, layoffs were announced by support staffers who had little information about the criteria that were used for layoffs or severance pay. Anger erupted and a brawl ensued among workers, leaving several injured.

*Post-incident analysis.* For a number of reasons—including liability risk—the company must determine whether interventions could have been effective as a preventive measure.

After a worker at a Wisconsin public utility killed a fellow employee, a psychologist conducted a thorough post-incident analysis. Together with representatives of the security, human resources, and medical departments and a corporate attorney, he reviewed the perpetrator's initial job application, his physical, and police reports, and conducted interviews with co-workers and family members. The work resulted in several new policies, including supervisor training, notification to team members of threats, and an improved Employee Assistance Program referral system. The company is also considering a confidential hotline for reporting incidents that could lead to violence.

Employers must heed this warning—if only in the interest of profitability. A dysfunctional workplace is not productive, and it can even bring about the destruction of the entire enterprise. Since Corporate America is the battleground on which the escalating workplace violence war is being waged, it is necessarily the place to begin the campaign to end it.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much for that overview of where you have been, and even more importantly of where you are heading.



Let me begin by running through a list of specific recommendations that the committee made on how the Postal Service might improve its operations following the Royal Oak tragedy. It is the sort of list that I suspect you may want to respond to in greater detail, perhaps in writing subsequent to your testimony. I have a list of about seven items, if you could respond briefly to each, I think it would provide a helpful framework for continuing this discussion. [The response to written questions follow:]

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY CONGRESSMAN TOM SAWYER TO  
POSTMASTER GENERAL MARVIN RUNYON

*Question 1.* What tangible steps are being taken to impress upon local managers that you are serious in your efforts to transform the agency's management style from historically authoritarian to a team-oriented approach?

*Answer.* We are taking multiple steps to make this point. We will be holding key managers accountable for improvement in the 20 question index derived from our annual Employee Opinion Survey. We will be conducting 360 degree and subordinate feedback for all of our managers and classifying their management styles and requiring improvement in order to advance. We have introduced team based goal setting and performance measurement and rewards systems through the performance cluster concept. We believe that taken together, these represent a clear and unmistakable message which has been heard by our managers.

*Question 2.* Craft employees are concerned that they are disciplined more harshly and more quickly when they engage in unacceptable behavior against a supervisor, than when a supervisor threatens a subordinate employee. How will you ensure that the same level of discipline is applied regardless of whether labor or management initiates a threatening action?

*Answer.* In the area of threatening or violent behavior, discipline for any employee regardless of craft or non-bargaining designation has been consistent. However, craft employees have recourse to an arbitration system that way, and often will, modify management's determination as to appropriate discipline in the way of an arbitrated remedy. Non-bargaining employees do not have access to this system, but may seek recourse through other forums which have similar authority to alter discipline taken. Thus the appearance may be created that truly inconsistent remedies are applied for essentially the same conduct. However, in the first instance, for investigation and discipline purposes, threats or violent behavior are uniformly viewed as serious infractions, regardless of craft or non-craft affiliation.

*Question 3.* The Postal Service recently banned smoking in all of its facilities. Is that ban uniform or do individual Postmasters have the right to set their own standards within that policy?

*Answer.* The Postal Service uniformly banned all indoor smoking in all postal owned or leased buildings. Individual managers do not have any latitude to modify that ban without headquarters approval. The only exceptions that have been granted involve space in postal buildings that is commercially leased to outside organizations. Where the organization refuses to cooperate voluntarily with the smoking ban, the lease will be renegotiated at its expiration. Postmasters and other facility managers do have the authority to work with employees and union representatives to decide on local policies regarding where or whether employees may smoke outside the buildings.

*Question 4.* When and how does the Postal Service anticipate curtailing its high use of overtime?

*Answer.* We have already focused attention on this issue. National overtime reducing goals have been determined jointly by the Senior Vice Presidents of Processing and Distribution and Customer Services and Sales.

Our objective is to balance service, finances, and commitment to employees through added focus on effective use of overtime, productivity, improvements, hiring, and effective resource scheduling.

Area leadership teams will jointly establish targets for overtime use within their Areas and meet with unions and management associations to ensure their understanding and support of this action plan.

Specific opportunities will be identified to improve productivity based on methods, management, and scheduling and staffing reviews. Complement plans will be reviewed and hiring strategies updated. Non-career employees will be hired to fill appropriate short term needs. Career employees will be hired for skilled activities con-

sistent with long term staffing requirements. This process will continue through the next year.

*Question. 5.* When a threat of violence is reported to a supervisor, exactly what steps should be taken to ensure employee safety and alert the Inspection Service? (i.e. when are the local police called? when and how often do you follow-up after an initial determination is made?) Is training offered to all employees regarding these procedures? Is it required?

*Answer.* When a serious threat of violence occurs, postal managers are instructed to contact the Postal Security Force or the Inspection Service if either is available at the facility. If neither is available they are to contact the local police and then report the situation to the Inspection Service. There is "follow-up" by the Inspection Service in all cases reported. The Inspection Service contacts and coordinates with the local police where they have made the initial response to a threat situation. In addition, we have established a 24-hour postal crime "hotline" for employees to contact the Inspection Service. Thus far in Fiscal Year 1993, we have received 512 calls on the "hotline" concerning illegal threat situations. This compares with 1,793 calls regarding alleged threats that were received on the "hotline" during Fiscal Year 1992. "Training" of postal employees in security and crime prevention issues takes the form of "stand up" talks conducted by Postal Inspectors and postal managers concerning perimeter security and procedures to be followed in threat and assault situations. Attendance at these "talks" is required.

*Question. 6a.* What were the effects of the restructuring on the Postal Inspection Service?

*Answer.* A layer of management—our five regional offices—was eliminated. We also consolidated our Inspection Service field divisions from 38 to 30. The regional positions which were eliminated were reassigned to the divisions, thereby increasing the number of working inspectors in the field.

*Question. 6b.* How many individuals are employed by the Postal Inspection Service? The Postal Police?

*Answer.* At this time, we have 2,045 Inspectors, 1,456 Postal Police Officers, and 667 Technical/Support positions.

*Question. 6c.* What percentage of the Postal Inspection Service's financial and personnel resources are devoted to the protection of postal employees?

*Answer.* The Inspection Service dedicates approximately 26 percent of its entire budget to the protection of postal employees. All inspectors and security force personnel are involved in the protection of postal employees, and this is their highest priority. In Fiscal Year 1992, inspectors devoted approximately 250,000 work hours to duties relating to the protection of postal employees. Our security force devoted over 2.7 million hours to the protection of our employees, the mails and postal facilities. We cannot break down the security force hours specifically to the protection of postal employees. However, combining the security force hours and the inspector hours represents approximately 45 percent of our total hours that deal with the protection of our employees.

*Question. 7.* In fiscal year 1992, the Postal Inspection Service responded to 5,000 incidents of threats and assaults of postal facilities. Please provide a breakdown between actual assaults and threatening incidents?

*Answer.* During Fiscal Year 1992, the Postal Inspection Service investigated the following:

1. Actual assaults (cases) .....	938
2. Actual threats (cases) .....	700
3. Alleged threatening incidents (approx.) .....	5,249
Total .....	6,887

*Question 8a.* What type of training are potential candidates for Postal Inspection Service employment required to complete? Are Postal Police Officers required to complete the same training?

*Answer.* Every candidate for the position of Postal Inspector undergoes 14 weeks of basic training at the William F. Bolger Training Academy. This program gives every graduate a general background in all aspects of Inspection Service work. Upon arrival at their first duty station, each Inspector undergoes another 500–600 hours of on-the-job training with field instructors. This training ends with a reinforcement block of training tailored to their first duty assignment.

Once established in the first assignment, each Inspector is scheduled to attend an in-service course of instruction, generally 40 hours, which is specific to the tasks, knowledge, and skills required to perform successfully in that type of work. Throughout their careers, Postal Inspectors receive specialized training as required for the performance of their assigned duties.

Postal Police training is 4 weeks in length and concentrates solely on duties relating to that position. These duties do not include investigative and internal audit responsibilities. Firearms and threat management training is required for Postal Police candidates and such training continues throughout their career. We are currently designing a "roll call training program" which would allow local training specialists to tailor in-service training of Postal Police Officers to local need. This training will be required at all Postal Police locations.

**Question 8b.** What type of training do Postal Inspectors receive that would allow them to make sound judgments about a person's mental state or propensity toward violence?

**Answer.** Our training designers and instructors are in regular contact with public and private sector law enforcement training organizations such as the FBI's Behavioral Research Unit at Quantico, Virginia, to maintain a state-of-the-art curriculum. In both basic training and recurring field training, inspectors experience a series of situational exercises which reinforce classroom instruction, video presentations, and case studies relating to manifestations of violence. We are not aware of any effective training for law enforcement officials on prediction of violent behavior.

**Question 9.** Inspector Hunter, how do you determine the need for full time Postal Police Officers at postal facilities?

**Answer.** The need for a Security Force is determined by conducting Security Force Assessment Survey, which includes a comprehensive security survey of such factors as local crime statistics, types and frequency of crime experienced by local businesses, extent of postal operations, existing security systems, failure of physical security devices, and other factors that may influence risk assessment.

The number of Postal Officers needed at a particular facility is determined by several factors, including: level of risk, extent of coverage needed, hours of facility operation, whether fixed posts or roving patrols are needed, etc. (4.9 officers are necessary to staff one 24-hour post.) We are evaluating possible changes in these procedures with a view towards substantially increasing the flexibility of local postal managers to provide security for their facilities.

**Question 10.** Are records kept regarding employees who display threatening behavior or commit actual acts of violence (including suicides) off the clock?

**Answer.** Records are not routinely maintained relative to threatening behavior or actual acts of violence when committed by an employee while "off the clock" and when the incident in now way affects the Postal Service. However, if such activity is reported to the Inspection Service, and it appears to be related to the individual's employment, the employee's conduct is investigated and the results are reported to postal management for appropriate action.

Prior to FY 1993, employee suicides were not tracked. Beginning in October 1992, we established procedures to track suicides. A total of 14 employee-related suicides or attempted suicides have occurred since October 1992:

Employee on duty, on property .....	3
Employee off duty, off property nexus to USPS .....	1
Employee off duty, off property no nexus to USPS .....	10

**Question 11.** Is there specialized training for security control officers in responding to threatening situations and resolving conflict?

**Answer.** Security Control Officers have been established in each facility to make sure that necessary security measures are being taken on a daily basis and to serve as liaison with the Inspection Service. We are finalizing a Security Training Officer training program which is scheduled to commence in October. Approximately 120 postmasters have been trained to conduct training of new Level 18 and above postmasters and a two-hour security training module has been added to the postmaster training program. These employees are not armed and will not be trained to personally respond to threatening situations. However, they will be trained to recognize potentially violent situations and will be made aware of procedures to obtain help from the Inspection Service or from local law enforcement agencies.

#### RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA-ROSE COLLINS TO POSTMASTER GENERAL MARVIN RUNYON

**Question 1.** I see from your testimony that you believe the reason for the violence was due most to change in the American workplace. Did authoritarianism in management play any part, in your mind, in the reasons for the shooting?

**Answer.** The Wall Street Journal article from which I quoted proposed that. "The increase in employee violence reflects both a stressed-out, downsized business environment and a changing society." Workplace violence is an extremely complex problem which cannot be reduced to a single cause or issue. Each of the violent incidents



suffered by the Postal Service in the last decade has had vastly different circumstances and individual causes. Employees who make the drastic decision to shoot coworkers and supervisors are not merely stressed from poor management styles.

We believe that one of the strategies we need to pursue is to change the culture of the organization to reflect greater sensitivity toward the stresses in the workplace and in society. To that end, we will train and evaluate supervisors and managers differently in the future. Other strategies include better screening of potentially violent employment applicants and better methods of recognizing and helping employees who are emotionally or mentally ill.

*Question 2.* We have heard a lot about a kinder, gentler type of management in the Postal Service. What exactly will be done with managers that get poor employee ratings? Will they actually be fired, or will they just be transferred to another facility or a less public position?

*Answer.* The Employee Opinion Survey and the "360 Degree Feedback" program will give our managers the feedback and message on how they should manage. These managers may be able to correct their flaws, and we will be providing training and developmental support. We will track their improvement. Those who have not reached and maintained acceptable levels of behavior will not be promoted. Those who do not show improvement will not hold people management positions. They may lack people skills and are inappropriately placed as managers; they may be placed in non-people jobs for which they are better suited.

*Question 3.* I know employees can be referred to the Employee Assistance Program, and you discussed in your testimony the likelihood that the EAP program will be expanded. Will the Employee Assistance Program be expanded to treat managers who are seen as authoritarian? If so, how will headquarters decide when problem managers will be referred to that program?

*Answer.* Retraining and reorienting "authoritarian" managers is an administrative effort, not one that belongs in the realm of EAP. "Authoritarianism" is not an emotional or mental illness that can be treated by counselors, it is a style or behavior that can be modified by training or other motivational tools. Certainly, if a manager's difficulties with changing management style appear to be caused by problems with substance abuse or personal problems, they may utilize EAP to help resolve those difficulties. The program does not need to be expanded to accomplish this. Supervisors and managers already have access to EAP services. EAP is not part of the disciplinary process for either employees, supervisors or managers. No one can legally be forced to receive counseling, just as no one can be forced to receive needed medical treatment. Headquarters will encourage of employees to make use of EAP services when appropriate; we will not make any mandatory referrals to try to effect a change in behavior.

The recently instituted position of EAP Coordinator will have additional duties beyond those of administering the Employee Assistance Program in each District. This position, which requires masters level education in social sciences or psychology along with significant counseling experience, will be expected to assist management in identifying problem areas in organizational behavior and in drawing up specific action plans to correct them. This may include training programs, professional interventions in dysfunctional work units, or other consulting services.

*Question 4.* What sort of mechanism, exactly, will exist to handle problem managers, now that the Postal Service is leaving so much responsibility to managers and supervisors in the field?

*Answer.* The Employee Opinion Survey annually provides an index on how managers and supervisors are doing, and facility and office heads will have goals to keep improving their overall results. Since this will make up a third of performance based compensation, this provides a financial incentive for executives in the field to deal with their problem managers. We will also cascade down to all field managers and supervisors the kind of ratings now given in the "360 Degree Feedback" program for executives. This will enable the identification, not only of the people with problems, but what their problems are. Higher level managers will be expected to provide rewards and promotions only to those who demonstrate the necessary people skills. These managers will be expected to work with their subordinate managers either to have them improve, or to have them reassigned.

*Question 5.* Why did the Postal Service report on the incidents in Dearborn and Dana Point not go beyond interviews with individuals listed as players according to personnel files? Why were more employees at Dearborn and Dana Point not questioned by the Inspection Service.

*Answer.* The report was written before the Inspection Service investigations of the two shootings were completed and tends to be an account of the primary events rather than a complete statement of all the information we have acquired during

the investigations. Many individuals other than the "players" were interviewed. In the Dearborn and Dana investigations, more than 80 individuals were interviewed in each investigation, in some cases more than once.

**Question 6.** Why did the Postal Service not ask employees about the labor management climate at the two facilities?

**Answer.** Questions about the labor management climate at the two facilities were included in the interviews. At Dearborn questions concerning the labor management relations were directed to both managers and local APWU officials. All indicated that while there were problems between labor and management, most of those interviewed believed that improvements had occurred since the Royal Oak shooting. At Dana Point, similar interviews occurred and by all indications before the shooting (e.g. a very low grievance rate), as well as interview statements after the shooting, employee morale at the facility was considered to be very good.

**Question 7.** What were the results of the employee focus groups? What did employees think was necessary to solve the violence issue? And, did employees receive the focus groups positively or negatively?

**Answer.** Focus groups were conducted on a local basis with no requirement to report back to headquarters regarding results. We therefore have no summary or analytical data on focus groups. Generally speaking, the focus groups were well received and were very successful in giving craft level employees an opportunity to express their opinions and concerns to the top levels of local management. These concerns ranged from issues of physical security (e.g., fences and guards), to specific fellow employees (e.g., bizarre behavior and threats), to general fears (e.g., stalking, drugs, and gun control), to treatment from supervisors and managers. Professional counselors attended these sessions to give managers feedback and help interpret results. Many focus groups led to concrete actions taken on the local level. Many of the groups also acted as an additional and invaluable two-way communications tool. We have heard from numerous sites who intend to implement regular focus group sessions throughout the year.

**Question 8.** In response to the full committee's report on the Royal Oak tragedy, the Postal Service stated that the service had in place training to help improve labor relations. Did Jason's supervisor receive labor relations training after the committee issued its report on Royal Oak, June 15, 1992?

**Answer.** No, circumstances were such that specific individuals did not receive labor relations training per se. There were changes in management personnel, and time was needed to assess the situation. Subsequently, the Postal Service was restructured and specific types of training were not provided. However, in the last three months, all supervisors in the Dearborn post office were provided with training to increase their awareness of the management style and propensities.

**Question 9.** Did the Postal Service take any action in Dearborn after the local APWU gave the Dearborn Postmaster and Jason's supervisor the combined "Worst Postmaster of the Month Award" in February of 1993? Was the Postal Service aware of this award? If no action was taken, why was no action taken?

**Answer.** As far as postal management is aware, the local branch of the APWU in the Dearborn area does not share the results of this award process. Since the criteria for the award are not shared with management, the award may be inferred to be a reverse popularity contest rather than a serious effort to rate management skills. The awards may recognize a manager's necessary but unpopular decisions. It is certainly neither rare nor remarkable that union publications in any industry are very critical of management.

The APWU has rejected employee participation processes embraced by our other major unions, has refused to participate with all the rest of the postal unions in the National Task Force on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace, and has maintained an adversarial relationship with the Postal Service. Consequently, even if management were aware of such an "award" in a local APWU publication, it would have to be taken in the context of the labor atmosphere that union maintains.

The APWU and the employees they represent have serious and effective means at their disposal to communicate with management about problems and disagreements. These include the grievance and arbitration process among numerous other less adversarial means, both formal and informal. We will continue to work toward improving communications with our employees and their union representatives. We will not, however, take any such "awards" announced in local union publications as serious indications in themselves of problem managers or supervisors; nor will we take corrective action as a result only of such methods of criticism. We are implementing a number of different means by which employees can evaluate their supervisors through objective and unbiased survey tools. In our view, this is a much more valid indicator.



*Question 10.* I would appreciate if you could provide the Committee with information on what the budget increase in labor-management relations and security training was in 1993, over the 1992 level. If training costs in these areas has not increased significantly why hasn't it?

Answer. The Inspection Service budget does not contain a separate item identifying the costs of security training. A more fully developed response regarding an expanded security training program is provided in Mr. Hunter's response to his first question.

*Question 11.* The Postal Service knew that the security at Dana Point was lax a few days prior to the shooting. The Postal Service also knew of the threat of violence from Mr. Hilburn. Why were no security officers assigned to Dana Point on May 6, 1993?

Answer. Apparently, the postmaster believed that adequate security could be maintained without requesting that security personnel be assigned to the facility. He had made no request to the Inspection Service for such personnel. The postmaster had issued instructions to all employees to make sure the doors to the facility were kept locked. He also held at least two "stand-up talks" with employees concerning the need to keep the doors locked. This effort was apparently frustrated by a contract driver leaving one of the doors open.

*Question 12.* Why did postal employees bring guns to work on May 6 for protection from Hilburn? Where was their security?

Answer. Two employees, the postmaster and a bulk mail acceptance clerk, brought handguns to the facility. When interviewed they stated that they did this because of concern that Mr. Hilburn might show up and become violent.

*Question 13.* I understand the Employee Assistance Program has been contracted out. What was the rationale for contracting it out? Did it result in cost savings; if so, how much?

Answer. The Postal Service, in a joint process with its major unions, has been planning for some time to upgrade and improve the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The planned improvements included such things as a broader scope to cover issues well beyond the substance abuse problems for which the former program was designed, and also provisions for counseling family members as well as employees. The existing models under study and the professional literature in the EAP field also suggest that the ideal service delivery system combines an "in-house" referral and promotional element with an outside professional service to provide the actual counseling. Outside counselors are generally perceived by employees (both management and craft) to be more professional and more protective of employee confidentiality. Outside counselors also eliminate the perception of management bias which keeps some employees from seeking assistance.

The massive restructuring started by the Postal Service in 1992 required the elimination of approximately 40% of all "overhead" positions. The purpose of this restructuring was to streamline management processes and reduce bureaucracy as well as to control costs. Since "overhead" was defined as any position which did not actually sort, transport or deliver mail, EAP counselors fit the description. Rather than try to run the same EAP effectively with 40% fewer counselors, we decided that this was a good opportunity to advance the joint union/management intent to change the entire system and implement the model plan. We therefore designed one postal position for each of the eighty-five districts to administer the program internally, and we reached an Interagency Agreement with the Public Health Service (PHS) to recruit and manage a large network of professional, community-based counselors for postal employees and their families. PHS already provided such services for more than 100 other government agencies. There will actually be a greater number of counselors available to employees through a very cost effective delivery system. No cost analysis has been performed since the two programs are so different. We have not had enough experience yet with the new program to enable us to project the net change in the overall cost of providing expanded services.

#### RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY CONGRESSMAN FRANK MCCLOSKEY TO POSTMASTER GENERAL MARVIN RUNYON

*Question 1.* What have you learned from the employee focus groups that were conducted nationwide?

Answer. Focus groups were conducted on a local basis with no requirement to report back to headquarters regarding results. We therefore have no summary or analytical data on focus groups. Generally speaking, the focus groups were well-received and were very successful in giving craft level employees an opportunity to express their opinions and concerns to the top levels of local management. These concerns ranged from issues of physical security (e.g., fences and guards), to specific fellow



employees (e.g. bizarre behavior and threats), to general fears (e.g., stalking, drugs and gun control), to treatment from supervisors and managers. Professional counselors attended these sessions to give managers feedback and help interpret results. Many focus groups led to concrete actions taken on the local level. Many of the groups also acted as an additional and invaluable two-way communications tool. We have heard from numerous sites who intend to implement regular focus groups sessions throughout the year.

*Question 2.* When will you implement the 360 degree review of field supervisors and managers?

*Answer.* We have begun gathering information on our officers and PCES executives and expect to complete this process by the end of the calendar year. We plan to roll subordinate feedback out to the layers of management below them in consultation with our management organizations after a year's experience with the process and its follow-on with executives.

*Question 3.* When that review has been completed, what does the Postal Service plan to do once it has identified managers who are authoritarian or insensitive?

*Answer.* Depending on the severity of the problems identified in the blind data review of the 360 degree feedback, managers will either be provided full time off-site assistance in improving their management style or will be given full time on-site assistance in working on improvements in these areas. Managers who cannot improve sufficiently after receiving help will be placed in positions which do not involve the management of people.

*Question 4.* You mention that you will be awarding a contract soon to obtain criminal records, employment history and driving records where appropriate. Could you explain in greater detail exactly what this firm will be doing? Approximately how much will this contract cost?

*Answer.* On September 7, the Postal Service awarded a \$43.75 million contract to Policy Management Systems Corporation (PMSC), Blythewood, South Carolina to conduct background checks on applicants for Postal Service positions nationwide. The average cost for these checks will be under \$30 per applicant. This contract will allow us to take advantage of system networks and enhanced processes that PMSC can provide which will improve the overall compliance with document gathering and turnaround time. As requested, the PMSC will provide the following:

#### CRIMINAL CONVICTION RECORDS

PMSC will obtain criminal conviction records from local (city or town) and state authorities where applicants have resided within the last five years preceding the date of application for postal employment. Where the disposition of a criminal charge is not reflected, the contractor will follow up with appropriate authorities to determine and verify current disposition.

#### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

PMSC will contact applicants' previous employers for the five years preceding the date of application for postal employment to determine: Dates of employment; positions held; nature of work—performance, where available; attendance record, where available; disciplinary history, where available; reasons for termination; if no longer working for employer, eligibility for rehiring. If "no", why not?

#### DRIVING RECORDS

For a position which requires driving, PMSC will obtain driving abstracts from the appropriate State Department of Motor Vehicles where applicant lived for the five years preceding the date of application. PMSC will provide the results of these checks in a single document with supporting documentation to our field professional human resources staff. The assessment of the information and final determination on suitability of an applicant for postal employment will still be made by our field professional human resource staff.

*Question 5.* The EAP program has historically been viewed as ineffective and a source stigmatization and embarrassment. What type of outreach are you conducting in order to advise employees about this new and improved program? If I am a troubled postal employee and decided to contact my local EAP program for help, can I use the program indefinitely? Based on your contracts, do you know how many employees are availing themselves of the EAP program?

*Answer.* On the contrary, the Postal Service Employee Assistance Program has been highly effective and has been recognized nationally over the past twenty years as a leader in the field in both the public and the private sectors. The program has helped countless thousands of employees to regain their health and their ability to

work productively. The improvements that we are presently implementing will again put us in a leadership role among industrial EAPs. In a program designed jointly with our major unions, we are adding greatly to the scope of the EAP, including problems and concerns well beyond the substance abuse issues covered previously. We are upgrading the professional credentials, experience and availability of counselors in the system. We have added considerably to the assurances of confidentiality. We have also given employees' families access to counseling. We are working jointly with our major unions to test a variety of alternate service delivery methods to ensure that we have a quality program.

Our Interagency Agreement with the Public Health Service (PHS) includes a continuing program of employee and supervisory orientation and training, posters and brochures for promoting the services, and joint training with union officials to help identify and refer employees with problems. Employees or their family members who see an EAP counselor for a specific problem will have access to twelve sessions, if necessary, at no charge. Professional counselors and PHS tell us that this is usually more than sufficient for the kind of problems handled by this type of counselor. Clients with more severe or longer term emotional, mental, or substance abuse problems will be referred to clinics or professional community services after consultation with the counselor about expectations and their personal health benefits package.

The agreement with PHS is now being implemented across the country with about sixty-five of our eighty-five districts already on-line. Reports from those places which have already established the new program show that it has been well received by those who have had the opportunity to make use of it. Nationally, our records show that approximately 3,500 employees have participated in the program since the start of FY 93, with about 500 more coming on since the implementation of the new program starting in March of this year. We expect this number to grow significantly as we begin the marketing and training programs agreed upon with PHS.

*Question 6.* How many man hours are being used by the Postal Inspection Service to investigate threats made by postal employees?

Answer. As of August 31, 1993, the Inspection Service had expended the following work hours to investigate assaults and threats committed by postal employees:

Assaults by employees .....	hours 10,393
Threats by employees .....	58,422

*Question 7.* Last September, the Postal Police testified that they were in a position to be helpful in the areas that they are stationed. Has the Postal Inspection Service provided additional training to them and are you using them to assist in assessing situations?

Answer. The primary responsibility of the Security Force is perimeter and building security. While they have not been provided additional training, Postal Police Officer four-week basic training includes instruction which qualifies them to provide assistance (e.g., Threat Management, Firearms, Introduction to Law Enforcement, Laws of Arrest, Search and Seizure, Emergency Response, Crime Scene Protection, Basis Principles of Security, Human Relations Skills, First-Aid and CPR). Local training is also provided to Postal Police Officers where necessary to meet specific responses and to address unique situations which may vary by locality. Security Force supervisors are frequently used during Security Force Reviews which include assessing security risks.

*Question 8.* Are there designated security offices in each postal facility? If so, what are their duties?

Answer. Yes, Postal Service regulations require each installation head or designated manager or supervisor to act as the Security Control Officer (SCO) of the facility and its stations and branches. The primary responsibility of the SCO is to ensure general security. This would include the safety of on-duty employees and the security of mail, postal funds, property, and records entrusted to them. The SCO is the liaison with the Inspection Service on security matters and is responsible for implementing security recommendations of the Inspection Service.

*Question 9.* Are Postal Inspectors required to document all the calls they receive about the potential for violence or threats?

Answer. Following suggestions from this Committee, all assaults and threats are documented and the information entered into a national data base which allows access to the information by authorized Inspection Service personnel.

Appropriate information relative to the incident is provided to postal management for whatever administrative action that they deem warranted. Referral to the U.S. Attorney's Office or the local prosecutor's office is made in accordance with their instructions.

*Question 10.* Dr. Mark Braverman, a clinical psychologist who has done extensive work for the Postal Service, testified at our last hearing on the issue of workplace violence. Dr. Braverman contends that training of managers is helpful, but absent structural change it will not succeed. Prior to this statement, he discussed the fact that postmasters of large facilities complain that they are so pushed from above and so caught in the middle and the needs of their workplaces and limited resources that they can't function as good managers. What structural changes have been made to allow postal managers to function better?

*Answer.* We believe that the overall approach to rethinking our culture and how we expect our managers to operate in it will go a long way toward alleviating the concerns which Dr. Braverman spoke of. Another structural factor which is being addressed is to change our focus from budget and cost cutting to growing the business. We believe that much of the dysfunction of which Dr. Braverman speaks is driven by a sole focus on costs, rather than on providing the service which will help us grow. We are changing this.

*Question 11.* Inspector Hunter, one of the recommendations made by the Committee after the Royal Oak tragedy, was that the Chief Postal Inspector should implement new performance guidelines for Postal Inspectors. Mr. Hunter, has this occurred?

*Answer.* I have made it clear to all Inspection Service managers that team and individual performance evaluations will be based upon a number of factors with greater weight placed upon success in preventing loss or injury, and timely and effective response to our customers. In this evaluation process, reliance upon after-the-fact performance (such as arrests) will only be one factor that is considered. Response to threats and assaults against postal employees is the highest priority of all Inspectors.

*Question 12.* For the record, were any of the postal inspectors in Detroit counseled and/or disciplined after the Royal Oak tragedy?

*Answer.* No postal inspectors were disciplined following Royal Oak. One inspector was counseled regarding a statement he made (not in response to a threat) that he was not a "baby-sitter."

#### RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY CONGRESSMAN JOHN T. MYERS TO POSTMASTER GENERAL MARVIN RUNYON

*Question.* One of the many problems inherent in our efforts to protect postal employees from violence and at the same time protect their rights to collective bargaining, is that there is a very thin line between when an employee, involved in a labor-management dispute, becomes a danger to himself or others and thus, a matter for the Inspection Service. What efforts have been undertaken to address this problem of joint responsibility? Has your effort with the heads of the employee associations and unions been successful in addressing this particular problem?

*Answer.* The dialogue with our unions and management association leadership on this issue has been well focused and actively engaged in by all parties to our Violence and Behavior Work Group since 1991. We are in agreement to jointly intervene with the appropriate parties to address any instances where a labor-management dispute could potentially become a threatening situation for any of our employees, including the grievant. Where it becomes clear that an immediate and present condition exists for potential violence, the parties are also in agreement that if various forms of intervention, counseling or medical evaluation are insufficiently responsive to the threatening conduct, that the matter does become a law enforcement issue.

*Question.* Inspector Hunter, the Postmaster General states that the protection of employees and prevention of violence have been re-emphasized in training inspectors. About how many of your 2,000 inspectors have taken part in this new training and did it take place at the training Academy?

*Answer.* Academy-based training is concerned primarily with new inspectors, although some in-service training is also given there. Inspectors-in-Charge in our 30 field divisions have been tasked with changing the focus of our field personnel toward prevention of violence. They have been provided a series of policy and program changes such as the National Assault Tracking System to facilitate this process. All inspectors have been involved in this change through the efforts of their field managers. In addition, detailed, written instructions on how to respond to threat and assault situations have been given to all inspectors.

*Question.* As you say in your prepared testimony I believe you did a good job of outlining for employees the effects of the reorganization during periodic briefings of one, two and three months. However, I have heard that the same effort is not placed on informing employees about the effects of route adjustments or the placement of



new automated equipment on employees. Would you comment on the efforts being taken to insure that employees who will be effected by these items are properly informed as to how it might personally affect them?

Answer. There has been a significant change in our commitment to involve employees in the workplace decisions that will affect them. There are a number of important efforts underway to ensure that employees who will be affected by route adjustments and automation equipment are properly informed as to how it might personally affect them.

The Postal Service's National Leadership Team includes the leaders of the national associations that represent customer service employees. Samuel Green, our Senior Vice-President for Customer Service and Sales, also has union leaders from the national associations that represent customer service employees on his Customer Services leadership Team.

Headquarters staff from the Postal Service and National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) have been meeting on an ongoing basis throughout the year sharing automation program information, planning automation implementation, and working through implementation issues as they have risen.

We signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the NALC establishing ground rules and expectations prior to the implementation of the automation that will lead to adjustments to routes in customer service work units. These agreements called for extensive information sharing and NALC input in the automation implementation planning process. Training on the MOUs was planned and conducted jointly by Postal Service and NALC officials at every level in the organization. Both the Postal Service management and NALC leaders were required to attend this training. As a result, we have seen significant improvements in our operating units.

The handbook providing automation implementation guidelines was developed with input from the NALC and they participated in the national field training of site managers, technicians, and local NALC officials. An additional training course for letter carriers was jointly developed addressing automation program goals, changes in work methods, savings expectations, and impacts at the personal level. This training is required prior to implementation and is jointly presented by teams of managers and NALC officials.

A new joint union-management route inspection and adjustment process is currently being tested which provides a new and significant role for the NALC in the count, evaluation, and adjustment process that determines the impact of automation on individual carriers. This process goes well beyond the levels of consultation that previously existed in the route evaluation and adjustment procedures.

The Postal Service is committed to these changes. In the past year we have trained more than 10,000 postal managers, NALC officials, and letter carriers. This training, which is a prerequisite for implementing automation, will continue as more sites are automated.

In addition, Headquarters has developed and disseminated to the field detailed guidelines for the implementation of automation equipment. A substantial portion of these guidelines deals with the development of local complement plan and communicating the plan to affected employees. An initial step in this process is informing the unions of automation and complement plans. Affected employees are provided with information about automation, complement plans, and counseling on their options under the terms of the contract to enable them to make longer range career decisions. Training is conducted for affected employees in new or changed positions.

Communicating plans and outlining employee options is a vital step in gaining the trust and cooperation in achieving automation goals. Both formal and informal communications methods are used: newsletters, speeches, videos, one-on-one and group discussions.

*Question.* Inspector Hunter, how would you explain the discrepancy between the police check for weapons registered to Mr. Jasion in Dearborn which showed 7 weapons, six .357 handguns and one .22 caliber handgun on March 11, 1993 and the May 6, 1993 search of his residence showed 18 weapons registered to Mr. Jasion, thirteen handguns and six rifles? And, was one of the 18 weapons subsequently found, the .38 caliber weapon used in the shootings?

Answer. A check of records of weapons registered to Lawrence Andrew Jasion was requested of the Michigan State Police Firearms Records Unit on March 11, 1993. The response indicated that Mr. Jasion had 7 registered weapons and no permit to carry a concealed weapon. The May 6, 1993, search of Mr. Jasion's residence and the weapons located on Mr. Jasion's person on the same date, yielded a total of 19 weapons. Dearborn, Michigan Police were able to *manually* check registrations and all handguns were registered, 12 to Lawrence Jasion and 1 to his father. The 6 other weapons were rifles and shotguns which do not require registration with the

state of Michigan. This discrepancy is the difference between a computer search and a manual search.

One of the 19 weapons found on May 6, 1993, was the .38 caliber weapon used in the shooting. This revolver was registered with the Dearborn, Michigan Police Department on November 5, 1987.

Mr. SAWYER. What kind of actions have you taken, for example, in response to improved review processes for applicants?

Mr. MAHON. Let me address that, Mr. Chairman. I think it would be fair to say that we have gone beyond the committee's recommendations in that we have put out a contract which we expect to finalize very shortly to have outside screening firms do our screening for us. One of the features of the hiring process that I don't think is readily apparent is that it normally occurs in spurts. We don't hire one employee a day; it usually is marked by long periods of inactivity, and then we go to the hiring registers and we are faced with screening, sometimes hundreds of employees at one time.

We feel that by going to experts in the field who do this all the time that we can be much more efficient in finding out past employment problems, driving problems and the rest, and leave to our human resource professionals the more qualitative judgments that need to be made in the hiring process.

Mr. SAWYER. The response with regard to the suggestions about effective use of discipline, effective use of discipline.

Mr. MAHON. Once again, I think that is in my area.

Mr. SAWYER. Yes.

Mr. MAHON. We have a continuing subcommittee, jointly with the National Association of Letter Carriers and American Postal Workers Union, and we are constantly looking at the issues of discipline and grievance processing. My personal viewpoint, which I have expressed on numerous occasions, is that we have a model which is too closely built on our adversarial legal system.

Management's tool of war is discipline, and the union's tool of retaliation is filing grievances, and we have advocates counting their win-loss records, instead of working together to find out how we handle the nonperformer. Like the Federal Government generally, which is looking at that problem of how do you handle the nonperformer, and the Vice President's present initiative, postal employees have told us that we don't handle nonperformers, we tolerate poor performance. That was a very embarrassing response, from my standpoint, that came out of the employee opinion survey.

We have some pilot projects that get away from traditional discipline procedures. A lot of times we, using traditional approaches, have given people time off when their problem has been that they are taking time off. We are looking at whether some of the things we have read about where you give somebody an afternoon off, but with pay, but also with the admonition, "spend the day thinking about whether or not you really want to continue working with us."

From a grievance standpoint, we are looking at grievance mediation, a process that will hopefully give us the tools for resolving grievances without making the arbitration community rich by carrying every case to litigation.

In short, I am probably going on longer than you wanted on this, but in short, we have an awful lot of innovative things going, and I am very encouraged by the receptive responses that we have got-

ten from our labor organizations to doing and experimenting and exploring the nontraditional.

Mr. SAWYER. Let me say that I would hope that streamlining that kind of process would be a part of that. It sounds as if that would be one of the outcomes from the process changes?

Mr. MAHON. Undoubtedly.

Mr. SAWYER. That deferral of perceived justice is really one of the sources of tension that we keep hearing about.

Mr. MAHON. You bet. My notion is that the grievance process should begin and end in the installation where the grievance arises. Right now, when we have these multiple steps that take the grievance out of the installation, it is too easy for the local people to pass the buck on, to pass the tough decision on to somebody else.

I am wrong, but I don't want to sustain the grievance and admit I am wrong, so I will let somebody up the line do it, and the same thing happens on the union side. By shortening the process, there is the benefit of an expeditious result, along with people taking responsibility and having accountability for what they have done.

Mr. SAWYER. Let me say I appreciate the thoroughness of your responses. Let me just try to elicit a reaction if I could, because I would like to see my colleagues expand on this area.

Mr. RUNYON. Could I give you some reaction on this situation?

Mr. SAWYER. Sure.

Mr. RUNYON. We have too much of an adversarial relationship in the Postal Service. I heard the word authoritative used, and we have that, and we are trying to change the culture. That is what the employee opinion surveys are all about; that is what our 360-degree feedback program is all about.

So that when you start letting employees rate their bosses, the bosses are going to have to change their behavior, or else the bosses won't be there, and people are beginning to understand that, not thoroughly yet, but when we get our feedback back and start applying these principles, I think you will see a difference.

Mr. SAWYER. Can you talk for just a moment about the work that you have done about actual physical security at facilities, particularly those with loading docks and other, more open access?

Mr. RUNYON. Well, we have done a lot of looking at our facilities at the way we can best handle each facility. We think that our managers are the people in the field who should do that the most. In the past, I think our management has said, that is the postal inspector's job and we are not responsible for that, and they should make sure it is okay.

We are trying to put the responsibility where the responsibility belongs, and that is on the local management. Maybe Ken would like to add something to that.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you.

The last time I appeared here for a hearing, it was in the first days of my job as Chief Inspector, less than a year ago, and at that time Congressman McCloskey was chairing the hearing, and he raised these same issues. What the report pointed out was there was not enough emphasis on security at the local level in terms of an understanding of responsibilities there, equipping people at the local level, and the attention that was necessary at the local level.



So we have taken a number of steps to begin to change that, because really, on a daily basis, security is the responsibility of every employee in terms of assuring that if they come through a door, they lock it behind themselves if it is to stay locked; that if they see someone on the workroom floor that they don't recognize without a badge, that they report that. So we have taken a lot of material steps to try to change that emphasis.

This month, the new Administrative Support Manual will include expanded and detailed instructions on the responsibilities in the field. By May, 75 postmaster trainers had already been trained in security matters so that they can go out and train postmasters at level 18 and above.

We have a number of other steps under way in terms of not only giving them that responsibility, but better equipping them in terms of the local managers having more control.

Our role, outside of being the law enforcement agency that responds when it's too late, from the prevention standpoint, is to provide that manager the expertise in terms of advice that they need to help shape the kind of security they need for their particular facility, and it varies by location and by the nature of the challenges that the work presents.

Mr. RUNYON. If I might add to that one thing. I came from private industry, and we didn't have a postal inspection office in private industry. We did have security. The security was not armed; we did not depend on them to defend the employees. Their purpose was to make sure that the property wasn't breached and things of that nature.

When we needed help, we called on the local authorities. In the Postal Service, the attitude has sort of been, if you have a problem, call a postal inspector. Well, there are a lot more local authorities out there than there are postal inspectors, and they can respond immediately, and that is the way we are trying to focus our efforts.

Mr. SAWYER. At some point, I would hope that we could discuss, and I am not asking you to do it now, the kind of guidance that you give local officials in knowing when to distinguish between those two. It is very important.

Let me ask one final question and then I am going to turn to my colleagues and maybe come back and ask some other questions at the end if we have time. Can you talk just briefly about the performance evaluation guidelines that you have for the Postal Inspection Service?

Mr. HUNTER. Yes. One of the things I found when I assumed this job less than a year ago was that a lot of the performance guidelines were very internal, they were very traditional law enforcement type guidelines, like numbers of arrests and things like that. We have changed the focus to the bottom line, if you will, both internally and externally.

I will give you an external example very quickly. Credit card thefts. Measuring the number of arrests for credit card thefts is not as significant as what are the losses to the company. So that is an example of changing it to the bottom line. Internally, it is not how many arrests, but what is it that the customer needs? In this case, it is the postal employees and the postal managers.

So as a part of the process, we interviewed over 300 postal employees at all levels to determine what are their needs of the inspection service. So we have done away with the guidelines like arrests and the number of arrests. Now, we are still in the process of developing what are the bottom line measures. That is quite a change. That is quite a cultural change in terms of listening to the customer, be they the mailer or recipients of mail, or particularly with regards to this hearing, postal employees and postal managers, what do they need from us.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you.

Mr. Petri.

Mr. PETRI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Runyon, in your opening remarks, you spoke about organizing a symposium of workplace violence. I wonder if you could expand on that a little bit. Do you have a time in mind or a time frame of when it will be held, and who do you anticipate will participate in the symposium?

Mr. RUNYON. We would expect to do that somewhere near the end of this year, and the people that we would invite are companies who are interested. We have had several companies call us up and talk to us about how we do this, because they have some problems that they would like to resolve too. We would invite those kinds of companies.

We would invite universities who are making studies on violence in the workplace. There are a lot of people making studies on this. I mean we are not the only one that is looking at how to avoid this problem, because it is a nationwide problem that needs to be resolved. We would think that it would be a good thing to do to have the veterans groups as a member of this, so that they could assist us in this area. The organizations such as unions and management associations would definitely be invited and participate in that, because we want to get all of the work that has been done, try to get that together so that we can share it.

It does no good for somebody to come up with a really good idea and then not share it. I think people would be very glad to share information and receive information about this subject.

I guess it was 3 days ago in California there was a hearing about violence on television which was—not a hearing, but a symposium, and it lasted I think 8 hours and a lot of people came together and talked about effects of that. A lot of different people brought different studies.

Now, they didn't all agree with each other about the studies, but on the other hand—and by the way, presidents of the television companies were part of that. So they were all talking about what part does violence on television have to do with violence in the country? That was thoroughly discussed.

I am going to be very glad to be able to get that information to see how it can apply to us. That is the kind of thing that we are talking about.

Mr. PETRI. I have lots of questions, but let me just ask one more and then provide time for my colleagues. I think you mentioned a search for some common factors that might give you a heads-up as to the potential for violence or for a problem in the workplace. Could you elaborate on some of the factors that you are searching

for that you think might be a factor that could give you a heads-up and why people are concerned about this sort of analysis?

Mr. HUNTER. I appreciate the opportunity to clear up some confusion which has resulted particularly from the Los Angeles Times article which characterized it as a secret profile. No. 1, it is not secret. It is something that we advised Congress of every 6 months in our semi-annual report since last year, and also informed the unions of, and it is also not an individual profile. It is not something like an Minnesota Multi-Phasic Personality Inventory [MMPI] where you can ask an individual questions and it would predict.

As we began to study violence in the workplace and we went to other agencies that have experience with violent acts like the FBI and other organizations, we found that something like this was lacking, and we felt it would be beneficial if we could learn from all of the experiences we have had what kind of incident-type events we could profile that might be helpful when we are conducting an investigation.

So a good analogy would be a medical researcher looking for the cause of something and they gather a lot of different kinds of information which they then dwindle down. So we took a random sample of every 7th case of incidences of assault in the Postal Service to get over 300 and we said, let's just gather all of the data we can from these cases, not go back out and reinvestigate them and find if there are some common things that in the future when an incident occurs that we should look at.

Because we are finding that there was a progression in the Postal Service incidents. So examples might be, in the future when we are called in on a threat or an assault to make sure we look at the employee's discipline history within the Postal Service, to conduct an external police records check, determine if there is a history of violent-related acts, spousal abuse, assaults, or a chemical dependency problem.

What are the kinds of things you ought to look for when an incident occurs to gather that information, and then for us to provide postal management with more robust information so that they can then take the appropriate preventive measures, whatever type of help that individual might need. So think of it as an incident profile rather than an individual profile.

Thank you.

Mr. SAWYER. Miss Collins.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have a lot of questions, and in the interest of your time, I would like to, at a later time, send them to you for written response, and I will just ask a few right now.

[The response to written questions follow:]

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY CONGRESSWOMAN BARBARA-ROSE COLLINS TO CHIEF POSTAL INSPECTOR KENNETH HUNTER

*Question 1.* In the Committee's report on the Royal Oak tragedy issued over a year ago, we recommended security training for facilities managers. In December 1992, the Postal Inspection Service indicated that it was developing such a program. Is that training program completed now that a year has passed?

Did the Managers at Dearborn and Dana Point receive that training? Did they receive any training on security after the Committee's report on Royal Oak came out?



How many security control officers have received security training since the May 6, 1993 shootings?

As a result of the violence that occurred, have you increased funds for security training? By how much?

Answer. We have made substantial progress towards implementing this recommendation. Approximately 120 postmasters have been trained to conduct training of new level 18 and above postmasters. A two-hour security training module has been incorporated in this training program. The role and responsibilities of the security control officer have been reemphasized in new Administrative Support Manual provisions which have been finalized and are awaiting printing. Also a training program will be broadcast to security control officers through interactive television broadcasts, schedule to commence in October.

We also are working towards training supervisors, managers, and employees on how to manage stress in the workplace. Supervisors, managers and union officials will receive training in recognizing and referring individuals to our Employee Assistance Program. Finally, we are making presentations to employees that address the problem and severity of violence in the workplace through "town hall" meetings and focus groups.

Although the new security control officer training had not been implemented prior to the Dana Point and Dearborn shootings, the managers of these facilities received informal security instruction from the Inspection Service prior to the shootings. Security issues were discussed with the Dearborn managers in October 1992 and in March 1993.

At the latter occasion, the inspectors instructed the managers to lock all back doors in the event of a problem situation and, on the day of the shooting, this was done. The Dana Point Postmaster attended a meeting held by the Inspector-in-Charge to instruct associate office postmasters on the procedures to be followed in the event of threats and to maintain facility security. Prior to the shooting, the Dana Point Postmaster had at least twice conducted "stand-up talks" with employees about the problem with Mr. Hilbun in which he stressed the need to keep the doors to the facility locked.

The Inspection Service budget does not break out the costs incurred for security training. However, it is clear that we have substantially increased the training of postal employees regarding security.

**Question 2.** When there is a threat of violence by an employee in a Post Office, is the manager trained to contact the Inspection Service? If not, why not?

Answer. Postal managers are instructed to report to the Inspection Service in any situation involving a significant impact upon employees safety or security. Depending upon the degree of urgency, these reports may be made by telephone or in writing.

With regard to threats and assaults, we have revised our Administrative Support Manual to provide the following specific instruction:

#### 228.2 REPORTING ASSAULTS

Call local police and the inspector-in-charge or local inspector when an employee or customer is physically assaulted or threatened with death or bodily harm. Follow the telephone report to the Inspection Service by a memo or other written report.

In addition, we have established a 24-hour postal crime "hotline" which provides a medium for any employee to contact the Inspection Service. Thus far in FY 93, we have received 512 calls on the "hotline" concerning alleged threat situations. This compares favorably with 1793 calls regarding alleged threats that were received on the "hotline" during FY 92. As of June 30, 1993, postal employees had contacted the Inspection Service on approximately 4,000 occasions to report concerns on actual threat or assault situations.

**Question 3.** At Dana Point, the Inspection Service was contacted concerning Mr. Hilbun's potential violence. What was the Inspection Service's response? Did the Inspection Service have any other contact with the manager at Dana Point prior to the shooting?

Answer. The Inspection Service was first notified of Mr. Hilbun's harassing behavior toward a female employee by the postmaster on September 18, 1992. The postmaster described Mr. Hilbun's conduct and advised that he had placed him on administrative leave. The inspector who took this call advised the postmaster concerning security measures he should employ and advised the female employee to report Mr. Hilbun's behavior to the local police. The inspector also attempted to interview Mr. Hilbun, was unable to locate him, and left his business card at Mr. Hilbun's residence with a request that Mr. Hilbun contact him. On October 5, 1992, Mr.

Hilbun contacted the inspector and gave assurances that he was not a threat to anyone at the Dana Point Post Office.

No other contacts were received by the Inspection Service from the Dana Point Post Office prior to the shooting.

Our investigation developed some unclear information regarding attempts to contact the Inspection Service. The Postmaster stated that he left phone messages with the Long Beach, California domicile of the Inspection Service on April 30, 1993 and on May 3, 1993. In addition, a human resources manager indicated she left a phone message with the Long Beach domicile on May 3, 1993.

An analysis of telephone company records confirmed only one call from the Dana Point Post Office to the domicile—a one minute call on April 30, 1993. An analysis of the inspector's taped phone messages also failed to confirm that calls were placed to the domicile on May 3, 1993. However, we did discover that a call had been placed from the Dana Point Post Office to the Los Angeles Division of the Inspection Service on May 3, 1993. This call was made to a security technician and concerned the installation of new locks at the post office. When the technician returned the call, he was advised that there was no need for his assistance since the post office had been able to obtain this service from postal maintenance personnel at Santa Ana, California.

After the shooting, the postmaster and the human resources manager stated that they had not attached any sense of urgency to the calls they had placed to the domicile. The phone message they would have received upon calling the domicile contains a 24-hour emergency number.

**Question 4.** In the drug stings in Cleveland and Toledo, inspectors were investigating non-postal employees. Why, when there is potential violence, do inspectors turn away from protecting individuals but drive on to "collar" non-postal employees in drug stings? I think you should turn the drug stings over to the local police, and get the inspectors out in the facilities protecting employees. Where is employee protection on the Postal Inspection Service's list of responsibilities? Is employee protection your number one priority? When will it be?

**Answer.** The protection of postal employees is the highest priority of the Inspection Service. Response to attacks takes priority over all other work. Postal inspectors in any assignment respond. Similarly, any inspector conducting an investigation of employee drug use will interrupt that investigation in order to respond to a threat situation. Drug investigations do not detract from investigations of threats and assaults.

Drug investigations relate to our concern for the safety of postal employees. Employees who use or traffic in illegal drugs in the work environment present a definite risk of harm to postal employees, postal property, and to the mails. The focus of these investigations is not upon non-postal employees. However, where we are able to trace the source of drugs in the workplace to a non-postal employee we attempt to arrest that individual and remove him or her as a source of the problem.

**Question 5.** You speak a lot about changes that will be made in the future, what changes have you already implemented to increase security at post offices throughout the country?

**Answer.** This information requested is contained in my response to questions 1 and 2.

**Question 6.** How can we best do behavior screening?

**Answer.** If "behavior screening" is meant to screen out potentially violent people from the applicant pool, the only reliable method available to us is through checking references and prior work history. This process has limitations because employers are generally reluctant to provide details regarding former employees' negative behaviors. The Postal Service is working with a number of experts to attempt to develop a valid screening test which can accurately predict violent behavior. No such screening tool exists presently and we do not anticipate being able to develop an accurate and defensible test in the near future.

If behavior screening is meant to focus on our present workforce, there are a number of methods we can and do use. Supervisors have been and will continue to be trained to recognize behavior patterns that indicate potential problems. With the cooperation of our major unions, we are broadening our EAP services and will be training both supervisors and local union officials in how to recognize those in need of help and refer them effectively for counseling. In those instances where threatening or violent behavior occurs in the workplace, management and the inspection Service will intervene, investigate, and take administrative or law enforcement action as appropriate to the situation. In addition to established methods of identifying potential problems (such as supervisor observation, and telephone hotlines), we are working with consultants to develop threat assessment teams and procedures for evaluating written correspondence. The most critical element in eliminating neg-

ative behavior is to let all employees know that threats and violence will not be tolerated and to give them alternative means for dealing with problem situations.

*Question 7.* How can we upgrade manager and supervisor training?

*Answer.* We continuously improve our training programs of all types by maintaining their relevancy and timeliness of delivery. Further, we have begun a process of better linking them to our corporate strategic goals (e.g., making connection between the Employee Opinion survey data and all supervisory and managerial training).

*Question 8.* How could the Postal Service have implemented prevention planning when restructuring the organization?

*Answer.* Postal Service efforts to prevent workplace violence predates the recent restructuring of the Postal Service. The violence which occurred at Royal Oak increased our attention to this problem. Following are some of the primary prevention efforts which have occurred: We have established a 24-hour, confidential hotline to facilitate communications with our employees. Employees can report threats, assaults, volatile work climates, or other concerns; an extensive review of previous threat/assault incidents is being conducted in an attempt to identify common denominators and unique identifiers relative to violent behavior. If we are successful, and tendencies towards violence can be identified, this approach may provide us with a window of opportunity to prevent violence in our workplace through constructive intervention; a joint Postal Service task force comprised of the unions, management organizations, and senior managers is developing a national policy for the prevention of violence in the workplace; we have corrected deficiencies in our hiring practices; we are providing security and human resources related training to supervisors and managers; we are providing professional conflict resolution services to our employees through an enhanced Employee Assistance Program; through focus groups and town hall meetings, we have further opened communications with our employees to discuss concerns and to make necessary changes relative to their workplaces; we are implementing the Employee Opinion Survey and 360 Degree Feedback programs to help us identify and correct people management problems.

*Question 9.* How would you implement threat assessment teams?

*Answer.* We are presently working with a consultant to develop the idea of threat assessment teams and propose a procedure for their possible implementation in the field. The Violence in the Workplace Committee, which includes representatives from the Postal Service and all its employee unions except the APWU, is investigating how this process works and has developed a prototype that can be used by committee members to address problems in work units anywhere in the country. Representatives of committee members will jointly receive training in intervention and will jointly visit sites to help resolve problems which have been identified as potentially violent. As we gain more experience in this area and evaluate the success of the process, we may institute additional joint labor/management teams in appropriate places to deal with potentially threatening situations.

*Question 10.* Do you think post incident analysis would be helpful?

*Answer.* Following violent incidents in the workplace, the inspection Service conducts investigations which provide postal management with the facts and circumstances necessary to understand the incident.

Miss COLLINS. I must say in all candor that I am disturbed that this violence in the workplace has not just taken a great precedence in the Postal Service, because it is so devastating to the employees. So I am going to ask you two, maybe three questions.

In response to a full committee's report on the Royal Oak tragedy, the Postal Service stated that the service had in place training to help improve labor relations. I want to know if Jasoin's supervisor received labor-relation training after the committee issued its report on Royal Oak?

Mr. MAHON. I have no knowledge regarding the training that Mr. Jasoin's supervisor had. He was the manager of the motor vehicle repair center, and I don't know what training he had.

Miss COLLINS. The Postal Service data indicates that he did not receive the training. Did the Post Office—did the Postal Service take any action in Dearborn after the local APWU gave the Dearborn Postmaster and Jasoin's supervisor the combined "Worst Postmaster of the Month Award" in February of 1993? Were you aware of that award?



Mr. MAHON. We received an awful lot of material from the APWU after the tragedy in Royal Oak. I had extensive conversations with both national and local APWM officials after the tragedy. We, Mr. Runyon and I, met with them for a couple of hours shortly after our arrival in Dearborn, the day of the tragedy. There were no signals, and I have told the local union representatives that, and they have not challenged this.

There were no signals at the national level of any severe labor-management problems in Dearborn. When we got there, there were many attempts to try to make it look just like Royal Oak. "You should have seen it coming." That is an unfair and inaccurate accusation.

Miss COLLINS. This award was given in February, 1993, so there is a breakdown in communication that they gave this award of the worst postmaster, you know, and that you didn't know about it.

Mr. MAHON. Well, unfortunately, it is hard to give meaning to every statement that is made. Right now, I am very troubled, and our union leaders are very troubled, about the number of people who say right now in order to get attention, "If this doesn't clear up, it is going to be another Edmond. It is going to be another Royal Oak."

Unfortunately, it is a way of getting attention, and it is practiced far too loosely and too readily, and it really contributes to the problem that we are trying to resolve. From a grievance standpoint, from a complaint standpoint, from the standpoint of writing letters to Mr. Runyon or I—and we get thousands of them,—there was never an indication that there were labor/management problems in Dearborn.

Now, I have said that regarding Royal Oak, we cannot say that. Royal Oak was an embarrassment with what we found out when we went in there, and with what we found people had been saying ahead of time. That was a bad situation.

Of all of the tragedies that we have had, that is the only one where I am embarrassed about what we found.

Mr. RUNYON. If I might add something to that, we get a lot of letters from people who say that we have a real problem here, or someone will say, I know how to use an AK-47 and I have got one and we have to fix this problem. We investigate those, every one of those.

Now, the letters that I get, I read those letters. I try to figure out what is going on, and then I give them to somebody else.

We have recently hired Dr. Massey and her firm. She is a psychiatrist and a psychologist who can look at those letters and tell us more about well, this one, there are signals in this. Doctors know how to do that; I don't know how to do that. But there are signals in this that you really better go do something right now on this one. This one, you know, perhaps your management needs to take care of this

So we are looking at things like that. Now, there have been a number of these investigated. I think that the number, if I remember correctly—Ken, you can correct me—it is something like 6,600 investigations of letters that we receive, similar to what you are talking about, the Postmaster of the Year Award.

I have gotten some of those awards myself. So I understand some of that. But maybe you would like to add to that, Ken.

Mr. HUNTER. That is correct. I would like to start by emphasizing that we respond to any report by an employee or anyone else. Sometimes it is by their parents or friends that someone is in danger, and we find that many times, as Joe Mahon indicated, that the issue is not an issue appropriately for us, it is an issue where they have an individual concern about a grievance or another complaint, and they contact us to get attention.

Now specifically with Dearborn, I was not aware of the incident you talked about until you reminded me of it, but there was an incident in September of the year before in which management contacted us because of inflammatory language from the union that was published, and I said you must something about this.

One of the things we are beginning to find is that that kind of language can be destructive, it can contribute to the trigger, and we did facilitate a labor/management meeting with regards to some of those issues there.

One of the things that has been a frustration for us is being called in to so many things we are not well equipped to handle. In Dearborn, as you know, our meeting with Jasion, which basically all we could do was pull from him what his stated intent or lack of intent was at the time.

We are not the professionals to do that, to do any kind of psychological evaluation.

One of the things I appreciate is the rapid movements that the Postmaster General has made to provide those kinds of services, to have these focused groups, to encourage the communication, to be very open. He reads hundreds of letters every week, so he is very aware, and he meets with employees, and the things that Joe Mahon and Bill Henderson are doing to bring about solutions where they are needed.

You have alluded in a prior hearing to some of your experiences, with communication, employee treatment, and management issues, not law enforcement issues, and it is very comforting to me that we are tightening up our procedures which were far too lax. Each division was treating things differently. We have now standardized that, and in each case we respond and advise management of the findings so that they can take appropriate action. I am hopeful.

There is still a significant way to go, but a tremendous amount of progress has been made in the last year.

Miss COLLINS. I would like to suggest the next hearing I think will be in October, and that will be with the labor unions, that you come or have your representatives here so that you can hear the other side of the story.

I am not going to take up any more time, because as I stated I have a lot of questions, and you have a time constraint. However, in the hearing we had in Detroit last month, you should know that there is a lot of tension and aggravation over the temporary employees.

One man testified who was a temp for 4 years. He has no benefits, no health benefits, no pension benefits, and the anger was very apparent in his testimony. And you know, unfortunately, people do give you letters and make threats just to get attention, but you can

imagine how you will appear to the public if you got a letter and then something tragic happens. Then they will say, "You were warned and you didn't know about it."

I find it very puzzling that a post office received Postmaster of the Month Award, that you didn't know about, and then subsequently have this violence take place. It could not have been a coincidence. You understand? So there is a breakdown in communication or a breakdown in the relationships between management and the labor unions, and I just would like to go on record as saying you have the same goal in mind, and that is a positive workplace, because the unions represent the workers.

They want a safe environment and a positive workplace for their members to come to work in. You want a safe environment. So it means that you have to come together. It should not be adversarial.

Mr. MAHON. Maybe you can help me—

Mr. RUNYON. Let me address something first. On the temporary employee for 4 years. That is absolutely wrong.

Miss COLLINS. There are lots of them in Detroit.

Mr. RUNYON. I understand that. I understand that. I disagree with that. I think it shouldn't be that way. We need to get our career work force back to the strength that it should be. And we need to use casual, temporary—casual is another term we use, we need to get that work force down and use casual the way it was intended many, many years ago when the casual employee was first created.

Miss COLLINS. For 3 months I think they are supposed to be.

Mr. RUNYON. Yes, 3 months, and then you lay them off and you bring them back. That is what is happening right now, and then you have to lay them off for 6 months and then you can rehire them back. That is no way to run a business.

Miss COLLINS. No.

Mr. RUNYON. You can't run a business like that. We need a good, solid, career work force. We need transitional employees because of the fact automation is going to cause the work force to drop. That is sort of a temporary thing, and we have misused that recently, and we are going to correct that. But we need to get a work force that has career employees, it has part-time flexibles that are part-time-flexibles.

As I go around and talk to people in post offices, the part-time flexibles are full-time overtime people. They get the most work. And that is not the way it was intended.

Miss COLLINS. And they are stressed out, they said.

Mr. RUNYON. I understand about the stress and the overtime because I worked in the automotive industry, which I am sure you are aware of, where I worked in one plant for 4 years 60 hours a week every week, and that is no way to operate, because you know, it is bad for the company from a purely company standpoint, you don't get good quality. People are not going to work 60 hours, so they are not there, so you have an absentee rate of 15 to 20 percent, so what are you gaining by all of that? Nothing. You need to have full-time employees working reasonable hours.

Now, we have the problem right now that when we went for the early out and gave the incentives to reduce our work force by 30,000 people, we had more leave than we expected. We had different people leave than we expected. Unfortunately, we had a lot



of very qualified craft people leave. We were not looking to reduce our craft work force. We wanted to reduce our overhead work force, not the craft people. But they left. So we have to get those back, and we have to get rid of this business of having people come in for 3 months, lay them off for a day, bring them back for 3 months, and then lay them off for 6 months. We don't get good workers that way.

You know, most people don't live their lives 6 months at a time or 3 months at a time, they live it 12 months at a time. So I understand that, and we really have to get that part straightened out.

Now, as far as union-management relations and knowing, coming next October to hear them, we have the presidents of the unions come to our meetings every Tuesday with our management leadership group. And we hear there if they have something on their minds; they are not bashful about telling us. They participate in decisions that we are making. They have input in there, and they have very good input.

I was up in Brockton, MA, I guess 2 weeks ago now, because I went up there to recognize the employees in Brockton, MA for achieving a 96 percent CSI rating. Now, that is fantastic. Seventy-one percent of all of the customers rated them either excellent or very good, which is you know, very, very good.

Our average I think is 58 nationwide. In talking to those employees, as I wandered around talking to them and met them later as a group, they said you know, you were talking about your meeting with union leaders. We have been doing that for years. Why do you think we are so successful here?

So we have places out there that are doing that. We are trying to get every operation we have to doing that. I am hearing what you are saying, and we will certainly try to make that better.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much.

Let me turn to Mr. Young, who is the Ranking Member on Miss Collins' subcommittee.

Mr. YOUNG. I want to thank the witnesses and Postmaster General. I think we are all seeking the same thing, that what I am hearing here and we are going to hear from the unions in October, but when you hire a postal worker, you don't hire off the street, do you?

Mr. RUNYON. We have applicants who take tests and get on the register. We hire from the register.

Mr. YOUNG. Then they join the union?

Mr. RUNYON. I think they have a choice.

Mr. YOUNG. The union otherwise isn't providing the workers to you?

Mr. RUNYON. We don't have a union hiring hall like some organizations have. Maybe Joe could better address that.

Mr. MAHON. That is a correct answer. They are hired, as you say, off the street, taking a test, getting on the register, and then we give the unions an opportunity to participate in the orientation session that all new employees who are hired get, and the employee then makes a judgment as to whether or not he or she wants to join the union.

Under the law, we cannot negotiate any type of union security clause.

Mr. YOUNG. OK.

Now, when you have an employee you have hired off the street, is there any screening other than the application form he fills out?

Mr. MAHON. Yes, yes.

Mr. YOUNG. There is a background check to some degree?

Mr. MAHON. That is right. We look for past military record, past employment history, and so forth.

Mr. YOUNG. Driving record, DWI.

Mr. MAHON. That is right, that is right. We—

Mr. YOUNG. Now, once they are in the work force, is there any grading or judging of an individual as he or she goes through the steps as far as attitude, working with colleagues, taking direction, that type of thing? Is there any peer review or any review by the union or the Postal Service itself?

Mr. MAHON. I don't think in the terms that you use. There would be an appraisal period at the end of the probationary period, which is 90 days, but we do not, unfortunately, in my view, have an annual performance review system. We have, although we have a collectively bargained wage structure, we inherited and still have the government step system, and that is pretty much automatic, as it is in the rest of the government.

Mr. YOUNG. The thing I am trying to get to, both cases of recent media-type exposed violence, were those long-term employees or temp employees, or new hires?

Mr. MAHON. No, they were—all of them have involved employees who have been on the rolls for sometimes many years, sometimes for just a few years, but they were all career employees.

Mr. YOUNG. Yes. That is the point I think—I do think somewhere along the line, either the union themselves and the shop steward—see, I am big on the idea of unions themselves helping their own members and those that are outside the union should belong, but there ought to be some review there too, because that is where you identify the problem.

A lot of times the Postmaster himself or the individual who is in charge of the Post Office there at that time, even down to the lower management level, is unaware of the stress point or the deterioration of that individual. Somewhere along there should be a review or a notification by the shop steward himself that "We have a problem, this guy has got a screw coming loose and until we tighten it up, we are going to have some real problems.

Mr. MAHON. I agree with you wholeheartedly. For some period of time we operated in an adversarial mode where the unions felt an obligation to pursue the grievance of every employee who came to them, whether or not they thought that that individual deserved continuing employment.

There was the notion that the duty to fairly represent those employees meant taking their case all the way to arbitration. We have made a big crack in that notion. And I sense, and I think our labor organizations sense, that employees generally are saying to the unions, pay more attention to the safety of the group as a whole and less attention to the 10 percent or the 5 percent of the work force that we don't think is carrying its load.

There is more of that happening now, and there is more of a recognition of that joint responsibility. Unfortunately, in some of these instances, it was the traditional case of management disciplining what it considered a bad apple, and the union pressing the grievance all the way up to the top. And in most of the situations, that has been a very unfortunate pattern. My notion is, we ought to jointly train our stewards and our supervisors.

As to how do you handle the "time bombs," as I call them, the people who everyone after the fact says "Gee, everybody knew that he was going to blow sooner or later." Well, we need to handle that jointly, not adversely.

Mr. YOUNG. This is what I think we all are in it for. Because you know, mental illness is nothing new. We are recognizing it more each day. All of us can get it. When you serve in this body, many of us have it.

You know, depression, which is now being recognized as one of the major problems, and if we are going to have a safe workplace, there has to be that—and I hear this, and I am hoping I hear the same thing in the unions, this working together to make sure that that person is helped, not punished, necessarily.

Mr. MAHON. Yes.

Mr. YOUNG. Be helped to become again a productive individual, and he doesn't blow up and does some—cause a great problem. Because that way you will have a safe workplace and you won't have this constant threat.

So I think we are on the right track here, Mr. Chairman, and I hope that when we have a hearing in October that I hear the same type of idea of working together. Because I have the same argument with all management and all businesses today, and with a lot of the unions. This isn't John L. Lewis time. This is the idea that we have to work together to be competitive and provide the services, and I think have a real safe workplace and a happy workplace.

It can be done. But as long as we—I have people on the Floor of the House saying unions are awful and I have some labor unions saying management is awful. That doesn't accomplish anything. We ought to be able to work out a problem.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you, Mr. Young.

Let me turn to Frank McCloskey whose work in this arena really is ground breaking and whose leadership we all appreciate on this issue.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

As to some of these concerns being raised, just waxing historical for a moment, but recently I have been increasingly interested in the causes of World War I. There was a day, June 28, 1914, when Archduke Francis Ferdinand was in Sarajevo, a human being for all his faults, and there was notice going around that day that it was going to be dangerous for him. He didn't get any help at all from the Hapsburg authorities for whatever reason, and whether it is Francis Ferdinand or someone in the postal workplace, in essence, getting set up for an assassination, reaching out for help and no one answers, it is a sad day.



I have massive respect for Mr. Runyon. I don't think anyone has ever intimidated in any way, Marvin, that you aren't a professional, dynamic, dedicated and caring manager. Your success in what you are doing is evident. But what I would want to ask are several questions along the lines of not so much studies or fancy policies, but what are we doing as far as what has been done as a matter of common sense that we don't have a repeat of say that one particular aspect to start off with the Royal Oak problem.

There were 21, Mr. Chairman, there were 21 notifications to postal management, and I think most dramatically and most egregiously to several postal inspectors whereupon the people calling for help were told at different times they were short staffed and one particular comment was, "Well, we are not a babysitting service."

Joe, Marvin, how do we know that isn't going to happen again? The inspectors that complained of short staffing and didn't want to get into babysitting, were they counselled or restructured in any way?

Mr. RUNYON. I will speak to that first, and then I will let Joe respond.

We have to change the culture of our management and our employees in the Postal Service. Now, that is a fairly big undertaking to do. We have been adversarial for so long that the responses that you are talking about have been rather typical. We haven't got that fixed yet. We are still working on that. You are not going to fix that in six months or—it is going to take time. It will probably take us—if we do it in three years, we will have really done a Herculean task, the postal workers will have.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Again, Marvin, I am not trying to be adversarial or negative.

Mr. RUNYON. I understand.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Again, I am just asking on an empirical, common sense basis, what counseling, what notification, what correspondence has gone out to these postal inspectors that there is follow up, that never again do you tell anybody "We are not a babysitting service."

I think that is common sense, and a question that just is begging to be answered.

Mr. MAHON. Well, we started, as you know, the hotline—

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. And particularly at the Royal Oak inspection service inspectors. Joe, you know, have they been called in and read the riot act on this?

Mr. MAHON. Well, I will let Ken address what action was taken to the inspectors, but from a systems standpoint, we have instituted and still have in operation a hotline. Every one of those hotline calls is taken seriously. Too often it is just a way of getting attention, and you have to try to sort out which ones that you react to by inspection service investigation. But we are giving the benefit of the doubt to any claim that violence will occur.

So that is one reacting device that we have.

The other that you have alluded to somewhat in your opening statement, the management style, from all accounts that I have received, we get good marks for the selection of installation heads in the restructuring. I have heard that from unions and employees

down the line. Now, I can't say that we get those same good marks as we move down through the levels where this culture is inculcated, and those managers I think have the responsibility with us of doing all that they can to change that.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Joe, were the postal inspectors understaffed?

Mr. MAHON. Were they understaffed?

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Yes.

Mr. MAHON. I would let Ken Hunter answer that, Congressman.

Mr. HUNTER. Congressman McCloskey, I can't speak to whether or not the inspectors in question were reprimanded, because that precedes me, as you know.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Pardon me? I am sorry.

Mr. HUNTER. That precedes my time as Chief Postal Inspector.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. As to what advice they got in the postmortems.

Mr. HUNTER. More importantly, let me tell you what advice they have now, and yes, it is in writing.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. OK.

Mr. HUNTER. The response to the fear of danger by employees, be it a threat or an assault, is a top priority for all inspectors, not just a few, not just a certain category, all inspectors.

You made a very good recommendation in the Royal Oak report with regards to the need to do that and to standardize how that is done and to keep records, because you talked about a series of reports in the Royal Oak situation. That has been done. There are now standard instructions that all inspectors follow when they respond, all the data they have to gather, the steps they have to take, and it has to be entered into the system. So that is into the national database.

In the past, it was more discretionary. Every division had its own database, but only those things on which we jacketed a case got into the national database. Now they all get in.

To the hotline, the hotline receives over 10,000 calls a year of concerns of all types. About 1,000 of those calls are employees who have a problem. About 600 of those are the kind that Joe talked about that go to—that are referred for the EAP or the human resource type of attention. The other 400 to 500 we respond to.

Now, employees also contact us many other ways. As Mr. Runyon indicated, in the last fiscal year we had 6,600 different investigations, if you will, of varying degrees until we either determined if it was a labor management problem and gave it to management or it is a problem we need to take as a law enforcement agency. So it is a top priority. It is receiving over a quarter of a million work hours a year of attention, which is more than double the area that Chairwoman Collins expressed concern about, the drug stings. So it is our top priority; it is receiving that attention.

Now, you asked, do we have adequate manpower to do that. Because it is the top priority, we have sufficient inspectors to respond to these cases. It takes about 8 to 10 percent of the manpower to do that. That means that whatever else they are doing is set aside because it is the top priority.

So yes, we do have adequate manpower to respond. Now, there are 2,100 inspectors. There are 40,000 postal installations, and often violence isn't just in the workplace. The majority of the cases

that we jacket are for nonemployees assaults on employees, so it could be out on their route or elsewhere.

So we also have an effective partnership with local law enforcement, because we could never be with every carrier every day and in every facility.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. You are basically saying my concern is being formally addressed as to the inspectors being counselled and on notice about this. That is very good.

Mr. HUNTER. Absolutely.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. How about in a crisis safety and evacuation plans in each workplace. Has that been done? Like if something happens in Waxahachie, Montana or wherever, I mean is there a procedure in place in Waxahachie that people don't in essence get trapped?

Mr. RUNYON. I will try to answer that. I went to Dana Point the day after that incident occurred and had them walk me through that situation, and I asked that question. You know, how should these employees have reacted at that point in time? There was no answer as to how you react, because if you have someone who is intent on causing harm to somebody, you don't know which door they are coming through.

It is very difficult to say to the employees, "Okay, here is the deal: When we have a shooter on site, we will sound a horn and go to these exits." You may be going to the exit the person is coming in.

Yes, of course, so that is a difficult question to answer as to how we respond to that. The person, for example, that that person was after was in that Post Office, and she stayed concealed. She didn't exit the Post Office. A lot of people exited the Post Office and went across the street, got in another building, and of course the person went to that building and tried to get in that building. So it is really difficult to have plan.

It is kind of like a fire alarm. When a fire alarm goes off, have you a signal, okay, this is your fire exit. It is a little different. You just can't anticipate where the problem is coming from.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. But generally, are you looking at this as far as, you know, general—

Mr. RUNYON. We are looking at that, and we are talking with hour managers about it and how is the best way to approach it, but it is going to have to be an individual case at each facility as to how do they do handle that.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Just one fairly brief final question, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Runyon, obviously as you indicated very well in your statement, there is significant violence problems in the postal workplace and in the work places, public and private, throughout the country. You said statistically, the Post Office is really no—is not really out of line with national averages. Can you cite what that statistic is or what the source is?

Mr. RUNYON. The most recent statistic that we have received—and I will be glad to present a letter to the committee—.63 per 100,000 in the Postal Service, .71 per 100,000 in the national average, so we are below. This is all workplaces in the country. So we are below that average.



That is nothing to be proud of, except that it is a heck of a lot better than being the highest in the national average. We are not.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. It is a societal phenomenon per se, not a particular aberration of the Postal Service.

Mr. RUNYON. What happens in the Postal Service is that we get very good coverage when something happens in the post office, because it says post office: Another one. And when you consider the number of employees that we have, 680,000 career employees, and something over 800,000 when you count all of the temporaries and the part times and the contract people that we have in the Postal Service, it is a large universe.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. I understand that.

Well, thank you, Mr. Runyon. I really appreciate your efforts.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you.

Let me just mention that that letter is actually under your left elbow.

Mr. RUNYON. We just got that letter yesterday and I didn't really want to bring that up, but—

Mr. SAWYER. It is a significant figure, it is a matter of interest to the members of these subcommittees, and so I think, since it has been raised at this hearing, we will just include it as part of the record since it has come into the committee's possession.

Mr. RUNYON. Thank you.

[The information referred to follows:]



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH &amp; HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Centers for Disease Control  
National Institute for Occupational  
Safety and Health - ALOSH  
944 Chestnut Ridge Road  
Morgantown, WV 26505-2888  
August 3, 1993

Jerry A. Jones, C.S.E, C.S.M.  
General Manager  
Safety Management Division  
U.S. Postal Service Headquarters  
475 L'Enfant Plaza West, S.W. Room 9301  
Washington, D.C. 20260-4231

Dear Mr. Jones:

This letter is a follow-up to our meeting yesterday. We have conducted a preliminary analysis of the risk of occupational injury death and homicide for U.S. Postal Service workers. Data were taken from the National Traumatic Occupational Fatalities (NTOF) surveillance system which has compiled death certificates for all occupational injury deaths in the United States from 1980 through 1989.

Based on our analyses of NTOF data, employees of the U.S. Postal Service had a rate of occupational injury death of 2.2 per 100,000 workers for the years 1980 through 1989. To put this rate into context, the rate of occupational injury death for all workers in the United States for this period was 7.0 per 100,000 workers. The rate of work-related homicide was also lower for postal service employees than for all industries combined. Based on data from NTOF, there were 45 homicides of postal workers between 1980 and 1989, for a rate of 0.63 per 100,000 workers. The NTOF system documented 7,581 work-related homicides for the 10-year period, for a rate for all workers of 0.71 per 100,000 workers.

We found our meeting yesterday very productive. We look forward to collaborating with you on an article which will present the risk for occupational injury death to U.S. Postal Service workers based on an objective analysis of available data.

Sincerely yours,

*Dawn N. Castillo*

Dawn N. Castillo, M.P.H.  
Epidemiologist  
Injury Surveillance Section  
Investigations Branch  
Division of Safety Research

*E. Lynn Jenkins*

E. Lynn Jenkins, M.A.  
Statistician  
Injury Surveillance Section  
Investigations Branch  
Division of Safety Research

Mr. SAWYER. Let me just ask a couple of other very brief questions. The whole question of the kinds of specific procedures that supervisors are instructed to undertake at the time that a threat of violence emerges in the workplace itself. When do you contact local police? How do you go about responding with regard to the safety of other employees in that setting? And the kind of training that supervisors are given in order to make those kinds of judgments about the mental state of individual employees?

Can you talk about the kind of progress that the Inspection Service is making in terms of establishing procedure and providing the tools for employees not under your jurisdiction, but who would benefit from the kind of training and judgment that you may offer, whoever chooses to answer?

Mr. HUNTER. Yes. We are trying to attack that in a number of ways. One is by pushing down knowledge and responsibility for security to the local facilities. So as I indicated earlier, as early as May of this year, 75 trainers of postmasters have been trained to go back out and to do the training.

Now, that will take some time. Additionally, our inspectors are giving what we call standup talks to postal employees, and in the first 9 months of this fiscal year we have given standup talks to more than 70,000 postal employees. Now, that still leaves a lot. It is a huge universe out there.

Mr. Runyon has tried to address the issue, has addressed it very well through the magazine that goes to all employees, telling them of the concern, telling them about the 1-800 number. The training for the local installations is to tell them the kinds of things they need to consider so that they can tailor that to their situation, because remember, if it is a town we don't have inspectors in, or even if we do, but they are at another location, they need to know employee safety, number one, call the local police, what is that number, work with the local police, get them in so they know the layout of the facility in advance, those kinds of things.

So it is those kinds of things that we are working on.

Chairwoman Collins, I agree with you about the communication, and we are very open to the receipt of communication from any organizations in terms of their concerns, and many of the employee organizations do contact us.

Joe Mahon, who chairs the Joint Task Force on Violence in the Workplace, which all employee organizations are invited to be members of, has been very successful in implementing, with the employer organizations, an intervention process where they can actually, any member can raise a particular facility, a particular individual, and that will trigger action, not a debate as to whether action should be given.

I regret that one of the organizations does not participate in that, because I think you are absolutely right, that we all need to, and I very much wish that their membership—because I was a clerk 29 years ago in the Postal Service, could be afforded the same level of involvement.

Mr. SAWYER. Miss Collins had an additional question.

Miss COLLINS. I did. At Dana Point the Inspection Service was contacted concerning Mr. Hillbin's potential violence. What was—this is for you, Mr. Hunter. What was the Inspection Service's re-



sponse, and did you have any other contact with the manager at Dana Point prior to the shooting?

Mr. HUNTER. I don't recall all the specific details. I know that shortly before the shooting, the postmaster did call the Inspection Service and got a recorded message. The inspector was not in, and the recorded message indicates that if it is an emergency, another number can be called. That wasn't.

A lot of the events that preceded that did not involve the Inspection Service. You may recall it involved the local police. There was kind of an on again-off again effort with regards to law enforcement activity as opposed to some other kind of activities to correct the problem.

Miss COLLINS. Let me go on to my second question then.

Mr. HUNTER. Sure.

Miss COLLINS. In the drug stings in Cleveland and Toledo, inspectors were investigating nonpostal employees. Why, when there is potential violence, do inspectors turn away from protecting individuals, but drive on to collar nonpostal employees in drug stings? I believe that you should turn the drug stings over to the local police and get the inspectors out in the facilities amongst the postal employees, protecting postal employees.

Where is employee protection on the Postal Inspection Service's list of responsibilities? Is it your No. 1 priority? Or where is it on the list of your priorities?

Mr. HUNTER. It is the No. 1 priority. In fact, we just reviewed all priorities with all of our managers last week at a 3-day management meeting, and rather than give them a list, we said, you give us a list of our priorities, and they were broken into individual groups.

Every group came back with the top priority is the safety of the employees, and it receives the top priority, not the drug investigations you are talking about. I regret very much the situation that I have inherited in Cleveland and I am committed to repairing it. It is, in my mind, the darkest blemish on the very proud record of a very fine Federal law enforcement agency and you are familiar with some of our other work from the hearing you recently chaired on our work to protect the public from the fraudulent use of the mail. But there is no excuse for what happened in Cleveland.

It was not inspectors doing that at the sake of the safety. Drug investigations are very perplexing. It is one of the things that postal managers consistently ask the Inspection Service to give attention to, because substance abuse creates safety problems as well as other problems in the workplace.

If employees are under the influence of narcotics or any other kind of substance abuse and they are operating any type of equipment that could represent a danger to them and a danger to others. However, having said that, those investigations need to be conducted professionally and we need to assure that we don't violate the individual rights of our employees.

In the last 5 years, we have had 2,500 drug investigations, many of those requested by postal managers. Most of them have been concluded with arrests and convictions.

I am not excusing Cleveland; it troubles me greatly. I am having an internal as well as external review done, because there would

not be credibility in us just checking ourselves. So we have external entities that are taking a look at serious issues in my mind about the quality of the investigation, about the attitude of the inspectors, and whether or not there are racial implications in that that we need to look more carefully at. Is there a bias?

We are keeping Chairman Clay fully informed and will continue to in terms of the results of those reviews and the status. I sincerely regret it and I regret the impact it has had upon the pride of over 2,000 inspectors who are out there every day protecting employees, protecting the public, protecting mailers from any misuse of the mail, but I intend to address it and to continue to address it straightforwardly. But the top priority is the safety of our employees, and that was not done at the sake of—

Miss COLLINS. That leads me to one final question. How many postal violence complaints have you investigated this year?

Mr. HUNTER. Postal violence complaints this year, now this year the statistics I have are through the 30th of June. And we are on a fiscal year basis, so that would be three-quarters of the year. There have been 1,100 instances in which we felt it was serious enough to jacket a case which results in a formal report and often results in action.

Now, again, the largest category of those are assaults of nonemployees on employees. There have been another 2,805 that we are giving attention to that are in the threat category that often do not pan out to be a serious threat of violence, but we still give all of those attention.

Miss COLLINS. That is 3,950.

Mr. HUNTER. Yes.

Miss COLLINS. All together. That haven't been investigated, really, or your intention has been—

Mr. HUNTER. No. That is investigations that have been concluded or under way. Remember, last year, as the Postmaster General indicated, by the end of the year it was 6,600. Those are the investigations, and they consume about 100,000 man-hours a year, but there is another 160,000 hours of men and women in the Inspection Service that are consumed on the prevention kinds of things.

You remember I mentioned all the standup talks reaching 70,000. So when you ask for those numbers, that is kind of the law enforcement side kicking in, but there is an even greater effort with regard to prevention. I mean my goal would be to not have to use the law enforcement skills very much. It is very good to have the blend so that when you encounter a situation where they are appropriate, you are trained to use them. But there is even more emphasis on the prevention.

Miss COLLINS. The reason I ask is because you had 2,500 investigations in the drug-related—

Mr. HUNTER. In 5 years.

Miss COLLINS. OK. And 1,100 in the last 3 quarters for violence.

Mr. HUNTER. Well, those were jacketed cases. Remember, you add in the 2,805, because those were investigated. But often you begin to investigate them and you find that it is a labor-management situation, it is a concern over a grievance. They all get attention. They all get attention. And the amount of attention that is

given in this area, if you want to look at it in another way, is over twice the inspector hours that are given to drug investigations.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you.

Mr. HUNTER. Employees, by the way—excuse me, Chairwoman Collins, employees in the employee opinion survey also expressed concern about drugs in the workplace. I mean it is a valid concern. What I have to make sure is that when we address it, we address it consistently in a professional manner, not in the manner that occurred in Ohio.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you.

Mr. SAWYER. Mr. Petri.

Mr. PETRI. Just one last question, Mr. Runyon. This is in regard to your effort to secure an outside contractor to gather criminal information on applicants for postal positions.

Isn't that information available through regular channels from the Federal data base, and if not, why not, and if it is, why are you going through an outside contractors?

Mr. RUNYON. Well, the—I will give you my answer and maybe Joe wants to straighten me out a little bit. But the fact is, that we are not looking at just Federal employees to hire, we are looking at the general public, and we do use the records of the Federal agencies, but we are talking about the general public, that the other agencies don't have access to that information.

Mr. PETRI. No, but I am talking about Federal law enforcement records, not Federal employee records.

Mr. HUNTER. Let me answer that. The Federal inquiries that could be made, like an FBI records check or an NCIC type check would not disclose all of the information that would be pertinent to making a hiring decision. There are a lot of incidents with local law enforcement that will not make those national Federal records that you would want to know as a prospective employer. A call to a person's home, because of an allegation of spousal abuse, some of the DWI's that you talked about or arrests for altercations and things which would indicate, this is an individual that settles disagreements in a combative manner, but they are not offenses of the level that they reach some of those national Federal data bases, but you would definitely want to know in making that employment decision about that kind of manifestation of behavior or some kind of substance abuse.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you all very much. This has been a productive hearing.

I just have a couple more items of business.

In addition to Mr. Myers, who offered his statement for the record, I want to note for the record that Congressman Bishop and Congressman Wynn were here and have taken an active interest in the work that we are doing here today.

In conclusion, let me just also mention that the subcommittee received a letter regarding some of the items that were conveyed publicly earlier this summer regarding some of the incidents of violence and implications for some employee groups.

That letter from The American Legion will be made a part of the record, as well, in addition to letters that you offered at the beginning of July, Mr. Runyon, regarding your own concerns about those same incidences.



[The information referred to follows:]

SENT BY:AMERICAN LEGION

: 8- 4-93 : 5:15PM :

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: # 2

# The American Legion

★ WASHINGTON OFFICE ★ 1808 "K" STREET, N. W. ★ WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006 ★  
(202) 681-2711 ★



OFFICE OF THE  
NATIONAL COMMANDER

August 4, 1993

Honorable Thomas C. Sawyer, Chairman  
House Post Office and Civil Service  
Subcommittee on Census, Statistics  
and Postal Personnel  
515 O'Neill House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On the evening of June 15, ABC World News Tonight's American Agenda aired a segment on violence in the postal service. The reporter said the "hiring of veterans" led the list of reasons for the recent killings, and former Postmaster General Anthony Frank was shown saying: "The {veteran's} disability can be mental or physical ... There are people there that are mentally unstable who've been taught to kill."

While The American Legion shares ABC's and Anthony Frank's concern about violence in the postal service workplace, we are outraged that Frank would assign the blame to veterans. And we are appalled that a major network would broadcast this assessment without documentation or comment, as if it were a proven fact that disabled veterans are, by training or disposition, disposed to violence.

No Americans have given more of themselves to their nation than our disabled veterans. For them the war continues forever and nothing will restore to them what they sacrificed for their country.

Frank's statement maligns every disabled veteran, disparages the character of all who served, and surely sows doubt in the minds of potential employers about the wisdom of veterans preference or whether they should even hire veterans at all.

And for the sake of a good sound bite, ABC allowed this character assassination to be aired. How ironic that their freedom of speech was purchased by the very ones maligned.

At the very least, ABC should have questioned the validity of Frank's assessment, cited the "experts" who placed veterans at the top of the "list of reasons for the recent killings," and

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Honorable Thomas Sawyer  
August 4, 1993  
Page #2

pointed out that the nation's two largest employers of veterans -- the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs -- have no such problems as manifested at the postal service.

While postal workers blame the violence on stress, monotony, unfit management and a military-like atmosphere at all levels within the system, a former postmaster cites mentally unstable veterans who've been taught to kill as the leading suspects. If Frank's intemperate and unsubstantiated remarks are characteristic of the depth of postal management insight, it is little wonder that morale is rock bottom and anger infects the workplace.

No other group of Americans could have been similarly maligned and the slander aired without documentation or comment. Certainly no group deserves it less than those who have laid their lives on the line for each of us. We are so angered by this total mischaracterization of veterans that we have referred the entire matter to legal counsel with a request that it be reviewed for possible litigation on behalf of all veterans.

Furthermore, on behalf of the 3.1 million men and women of The American Legion, and each of America's 27 million living veterans, we are requesting that you use the power of your office to demand an apology by the U.S. Postal Service and request that ABC World News Tonight air a clarification or retraction. It is unconscionable that such character assassination should be allowed to stand without correction or apology.

Sincerely,

*Roger A. Munson*  
ROGER A. MUNSON  
National Commander

Post-It™ brand fax transmittal memo 7871		# of pages » 2
To JAN	From Steve Robertson	
Co.		
Dept.	Phone #	
Fax # 202-225-3226	Fax # 202-861-2740	





MARVIN RUNYON  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER PMSG

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
475 L ERIE PLAZA SW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20020-2010

July 6, 1993

The Honorable Jesse Brown  
Secretary of the Department of  
Veterans Affairs  
801 I Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20001-3709

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This responds to your recent correspondence concerning violence in the Postal Service.

I appreciated the opportunity to speak with you and discuss an issue that has been the source of great concern to both of us. Mr. Frank was acting as a private citizen in the television interview he gave ABC News. His comments do not represent the views of the Postal Service, and I do not share his opinion about this matter.

As Postmaster General and a proud veteran, I value the great contributions that veterans have made to this country and organization. All of us in the Postal Service recognize that these senseless acts of violence were committed by individuals affected by a complex web of social and personal variables. We must come to grips with this problem by identifying the many elements, in and out of the workplace, that contribute to violence and stress and eliminate them to the greatest extent possible.

The Postal Service will be working closely with employee groups, corporate representatives, and all interested parties in an effort to eliminate workplace violence. I welcome your comments and contributions to this process.

Best regards,



MARVIN RUNYON  
 UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20501  
 2051 L EDITION, P. 24-50  
 WASHINGTON, DC 20501 0010

July 6, 1993

Mr. Robert W. Spanogle  
 National Adjutant  
 The American Legion  
 Post Office Box 1055  
 Indianapolis, IN 46206-1055

Dear Mr. Spanogle:

This responds to your recent correspondence concerning violence in the Postal Service and remarks made by former Postmaster General Anthony M. Frank during an interview on ABC News in June.

At recent events honoring the 50th anniversary of the Pentagon and the dedication of our World War II stamps, I mentioned that the Postal Service is the largest employer of veterans. As Postmaster General and a proud veteran, I value the great contributions that veterans have made to this country and organization.

Mr. Frank was acting as a private citizen in the television interview he gave ABC News. His comments do not represent the views of the Postal Service, and I do not share his opinion about this matter. All of us in the Postal Service recognize that these senseless acts of violence were committed by individuals affected by a complex web of social and personal variables. We must come to grips with this problem by identifying the many elements, in and out of the workplace, that contribute to violence and stress and eliminate them to the greatest extent possible.

The Postal Service will be working closely with employee groups, corporate representatives, and all interested parties in an effort to eliminate workplace violence. I welcome your comments and contributions to this process.

Best regards,

*Marvin Runyon*

Mr. SAWYER. We will make that letter available to you, and if you want to respond further to those, I think it might be helpful and useful.

If there is no further business to come before the subcommittee, we stand adjourned.

Thank you.

Mr. RUNYON. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 12:07 p.m., the subcommittees were adjourned.]





# JOINT HEARING TO REVIEW CONCERNS ABOUT VIOLENCE IN THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14, 1993

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, SUBCOMMITTEE ON CEN-  
SUS, STATISTICS AND POSTAL PERSONNEL, JOINTLY  
WITH SUBCOMMITTEE ON POSTAL OPERATIONS AND  
SERVICES, COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL  
SERVICE,

*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittees met, pursuant to call, at 10 a.m., in room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Barbara-Rose Collins (chair of the Subcommittee on Postal Operations and Services) presiding.

Members present: Representatives Sawyer, McCloskey, and Petri.

Miss COLLINS. The Subcommittee on Postal Operations and Services and the Subcommittee on Census, Statistics and Postal Personnel will now come to order. This is a continuation of the joint hearings to review concerns about violence in the U.S. Postal Service.

Good morning. I would like to thank my distinguished colleague, the Honorable Thomas Sawyer, for cochairing this important hearing. I'd also like to thank all of you for attending this second in a series of joint hearings by the two subcommittees mentioned to examine the issue of violence against postal workers.

The overall problem of violence in the workplace is becoming a national problem. The rate of workplace homicides have tripled in the last decade. The latest statistics show that 15 persons are murdered each month while on the job.

To address the problem of workplace violence, employers and workers must have a clear understanding of their prospective roles. Employers must be aware of the concerns of the workers and provide a method by which these concerns can be addressed. Employees must be aware of his or her responsibilities to the employer and be prepared to accept the consequences for not fulfilling those responsibilities.

At the same time, respect and fair treatment should be exercised by both the employer and the employee. This may not be occurring in the Postal Service workplace as violence in the Postal Service continues to be a major concern of this Congress.

Last year approximately 30,000 postal jobs were affected by the restructuring of the Postal Service. Concerns about additional Postal Service layoffs and job uncertainties could be contributing to the increase in violence against postal employees. The key element in

eliminating violence in the work place is to ensure that all workers are treated with respect and dignity.

The Government Accounting Office, that's the GAO, has documented that postal managers and supervisors seem to vary greatly in their approach to worker discipline. As a result, employees are not sure when the smallest infraction may mean the immediate dismissal from their jobs, causing frustration and stress and resulting in possible acts of violence against fellow employees and/or supervisors. There have been several other incidents of violence relating to the postal community since the Royal Oak, Dearborn, MI and Dana Point, CA incidents, such as:

On June 20, 1993, John Sosebee, a 15-year Postal Service employee from Truckee, CA, was accused of murdering a female postal coworker and severely wounding her fiance. Although they worked at separate locations, the female coworker victim had repeatedly complained to her supervisor that she was being harassed by this individual.

August 14, 1993, Richard K. Nowlin, a mail handler with 26 years of service with the Postal Service, and another postal employee, were repeatedly stabbed during a robbery attempt in the Van Nuys, CA postal employees parking lot.

August 26, 1993, a Detroit, MI main post office employee went on a rampage after being told he was going to be fired before his 3-month temporary postal job ended.

August 31, 1993, Richard Himelwright of York, PA was arrested for making threatening phone calls to postal officials when he was unsuccessful in obtaining a transfer to a postal facility in North Carolina.

Recently, I received a petition signed by more than 850 postal employees demanding that we find ways to protect all postal employees from workplace violence.

Violence in the workplace is unacceptable. Violence in the Postal Service workplace is totally unacceptable. We intend to examine what may be causing this problem and how best to stop it.

At the first hearing of these joint subcommittees, which was held in August of this year, we heard from the Postmaster General and the Chief Postal Inspector. They discussed some initiatives that the Postal Service has undertaken in their attempt to combat the incidents of violence against postal employees. Today, we will hear from organizations that represent some of these workers. Again, I thank you all for joining us here today as we make a serious attempt to find solutions to eliminating violence against the Postal Service work force. I'm looking forward to the testimony of the following:

Panel No. 1, Moe Biller, president, American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO. Welcome. William R. Brown, Jr., president, National Rural Letter Carriers Association; William Quinn, president, National Postal Mail Handlers Union, AFL-CIO. Panel No. 2 will be composed of James Christie, president of the Postal Police Officers.

At this time I'd like to recognize a member of the committee, the Honorable Frank McCloskey of Indiana.



Mr. McCLOSKEY. Thank you and also Mr. Sawyer for holding these hearings on obviously a most important, grievously painful topic and I look forward to the testimony.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you.

Our cochair of these hearings is attending an Education and Labor Committee meeting and he will join us shortly.

The first panelist will be Mr. Moe Biller, president of American Postal Workers. Welcome.

**STATEMENT OF MOE BILLER, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO; ACCOMPANIED BY WILLIAM R. BROWN, JR., PRESIDENT, NATIONAL RURAL LETTER CARRIERS ASSOCIATION; AND WILLIAM QUINN, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION, LIUNA, AFL-CIO**

Mr. BILLER. Chairman Sawyer, Chairwoman and members of the subcommittee, I'm Moe Biller, president of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO. We thank you for inviting us to appear here today before the subcommittee to present the views of the APW on violence in the Postal Service.

To my right is Ms. Roxanne Cubrow, a safety specialist, an expert. To her right is our legislative director, Mr. Lloyd Braunstein, and seated in the room Mr. William Burris, executive vice president and member of our Health and Safety Committee.

I've submitted the full testimony and will only read portions of it in the interest of time.

Violence in the Postal Service is a daily concern to the 350,000 members of the American Postal Workers Union. Since Congress first held a joint hearing on the tragedy that occurred in Edmond, OK in 1986, there have been at least seven separate instances of fatal workplace violence among postal workers. Everyday postal workers ask themselves, "When will the violence stop?" Until Postal Service management recognizes the fundamental problems inherent in their system of management, this question will remain unanswered. Management styles, attitudes, and rules collectively work to create a high-stress working environment that's intolerable for many employees and may drive some workers over the edge. With the focus of the Clinton Health Care Reform proposal on prevention, Postal Service management should bear in mind that the cost of job stress, productivity loss, and other long-term health costs of workplace violence are factors that must be seriously considered in terms of developing effective prevention strategies.

From this hearing, the APWU hopes to see substantial change and not a mere rehash of the problems identified in past hearings. We'll also provide you with recommendations for change.

In testimony given last August, Postal Service management attempted to obscure the problem of violence in the Postal Service by telling these two subcommittees that the Postal Service experiences homicide rates lower than other industries and that the media exaggerates the problem. Well, I'm not here to defend the media. They probably do.

Postal Service management's comments ignore what is a very real problem and are simply another instance of management failing to comprehend the problem and avoiding accountability for its own actions.

When we look at the statistics in their proper context rather than superficially, we see the extent of the problem of workplace violence in the Postal Service and to some extent its causes. The contention made by Postal Service management included all types of homicides such as homicides caused by perpetrators outside the workplace, convenience store robberies and liquor store holdups as well as domestic violence which has spilled over into the workplace. These two forms of violence are primarily caused by factors outside of the workplace. While these must also be addressed by postal management, the type of violence which is endemic to the Postal Service is internecine violence. That is, violence by and between employees and employers.

Let me cite some statistics that address this issue squarely. The National Institute for Safety and Health, NIOSH, reports that at least 750 homicides occur each year in the workplace. Of these 750 murders, 24 are of the internecine variety. In the past decade, the Postal Service has seen some 31 internecine homicides. That's an average of 3.1 per year. Thus, on an annual basis, the Postal Service accounts for 13 percent of all internecine workplace homicides nationwide. In some years, such as 1986 when 15 employees were killed, the Postal Service accounted for over 58 percent of all internecine workplace homicides in the country.

When the issue is faced squarely, what we see is not a meaningless industry-to-industry comparison, but a form of violence in the Postal Service that is reaching alarming proportions. To ignore this problem is irresponsible and to fail to act upon it is gross negligence. I find it disingenuous that Postal Service management would rely on deceptive statistics to mislead the committee into believing that the problem is not that serious. The irony of it all is that the internecine violence is the one form of violence that management can do the most to correct. That would take some measures of critical introspection, acceptance of accountability and fundamental change from the current quasi-military style of management in the Postal Service.

Although internecine violence deserves serious attention by Postal Service management, we should not overlook the gravity of the other types of violence. Postal employees are also at risk for violence of domestic or outside origin. Whenever they pick up remittances, exchange cash, and deal with the public, postal workers are at risk to crime. Window clerks, motor vehicle drivers, and special delivery messengers, as well as employees working at post offices approximate to high-crime areas suffer from robbery, assault, and other violent attacks. The Postal Inspection Service has reported that violence has increased significantly during recent periods. Too often the American public overlooks the attacks on postal workers outside of the workplace also.

As a matter of fact, Madam Chair, I have here our own news service excerpt of last January when a motor vehicle driver was hijacked and murdered, his truck taken. Obviously there were circumstances in that, but nevertheless we feel that he did not have the adequate protection for that type of employment.

For example, in Brooklyn, NY, from September 1, 1993 through September 27, 1993 there have been five separate incidents of muggings and shooting in the proximity of the Brooklyn General

Mail Facility. Two victims were postal employees. The lack of secure postal facilities was a problem that stems partially from understaffing of postal police and security officers, poor maintenance of locked doors and exits, and the lack of other safety precautions. The addition of security outside the post office and in employee parking areas is an unresolved issue between the union and the Postal Service which must be addressed. When the union asks for postal security police, we're told our management will request that already overburdened local police forces increase their patrols. Few, if any, post offices control access or use passive surveillance measures such as video camera monitoring.

I have also a petition being circulated by the employees in the Brooklyn Post Office concerning the incidents that occur outside the Postal Service or in parking lots which are serious.

Management's proposed remedies for violence in the workplace fail to offer any real hope of a solution to all three types of workplace violence and ignore the recommendations of the experts on occupational violence. Suggestions of preemployment screening, employee profiling, focus groups, and other "blame the worker" tactics may placate managers and supervisors, but the APWU can no longer stand for inaction any more. Violence in the Postal Service must be addressed from an organizational and institutional perspective without pinpointing blame on an individual. Postal Service management must be held accountable for the safety and the health of its employees and that's what the contract reads.

Postal Service management should take some lessons from NIOSH, State governments, employers, and unions who are taking major steps to address workplace violence. Workplace violence has recently received national attention as an occupational health issue. In 1992, NIOSH released the Government's first comprehensive study on the prevalence of homicide in U.S. workplaces. In light of the report, Secretary of Labor Robert Reich promised that the study "would be used in Federal efforts to improve the safety and health of American workers."

To show how critical the issue of workplace violence is to the health and safety of workers and to bring congressional attention to this problem, NIOSH has agreed to allow the American Postal Workers Union to present at this hearing information from an upcoming document about workplace violence. This document is to be officially released at the end of this month and the document is entitled "Alert: Request for Assistance in Preventing Homicide in the Workplace." It encourages workers and managers to identify and evaluate risk factors in their workplaces that may lead to workplace violence and to implement protective measures.

The request of the American Postal Workers Union was sent on October 6 to Dr. Souder of NIOSH and they permitted the release again of this pamphlet called "Alert," which I believe is dated September but will be coming out shortly. In this, pages 4 and 5, they have possible risk factors and preventive measures that NIOSH feels should be taken. The APWU points out that the NIOSH "Alert" document does not recommend any of the intervention strategies that the Postal Service is implementing.

Postal Service management's policy to implement preemployment screening and worker profiling depicts the classic management re-



sponse to safety and health problems: Blame the worker. We've seen this response to other occupational health issues, from accidents and injuries to carpal tunnel syndrome. The APWU views employee preemployment screening and profiling as kind of a red herring to draw attention away from longstanding inbred organizational problems confronting the Postal Service. Employers must recognize that workplace homicide is an occupational health issue demanding serious attention that warrants effective intervention measures.

This committee has developed guidelines—we have an APWU antiviolenence and safety committee. This committee has developed guidelines for our local unions to follow in response to violence or threats of violence. We're encouraging our local unions to make issues of security and safety topics from the local joint labor-management safety committee to address. The APWU is also encouraging locals to offer workshops on stress and how to recognize the health effects caused by stress in the workplace. When violence occurs in a workplace, the APWU will provide instruction for implementing postresponse actions.

To gain a more thorough understanding of internecine violence, the APWU has requested NIOSH to offer recommendations or solutions. What we need to do is to examine the Postal Service as an organization, institution, and look at the conditions in the workplace that may lead to violence.

These congressional subcommittees have previously heard about the quasi-militaristic management style which forces an adversarial relationship between workers and management. This antiquated management philosophy is described in a 1989 GAO report on Postal Service discipline as the traditional approach to discipline based on the theory that productivity can be achieved and maintained through a system of ever-increasing degrees of punishment. Harassment and intimidation are inbred into the system. The result is the overuse of disciplinary actions to punish or control employees. The only recourse workers have is the grievance arbitration process. Over 100,000 grievances are filed nationwide each year. Of these no more than 2,500 result in arbitration awards. For many postal workers, the delays and frustrations inherent at a grievance arbitration process mean delays in paycheck, consequently missed house, car, and child care payments. Contrary to fundamental principles of justice and fairness, the presumption among Postal Service managers and supervisors is that the complaining worker is guilty until proven innocent. Economic punishment through disciplinary action, suspension, and firing will not make effective management.

The APWU vehemently opposes the use of focus groups that venture outside through traditional labor-management collective-bargaining agreements. APWU's reluctance to participate in these focus group activities may be criticized by some, but we see such focus groups as begging the question of problem identification and solutions to workplace violence on numerous occasions. As a union we intend to pursue solutions to the problems of workplace violence. We further intend to protect the constitutional rights of our members through the current system. The APWU looks forward to

the day when management chooses to negotiate with the unions on issues that affect workers in this regard.

The Postal Service management policy to reduce all postal operations except those directly affecting the processing and delivering of mail, for example, elimination of postal security services, occupational health nurses, human resources, employee assistance programs, and safety and health professionals, is seed which will bear bitter fruit. The current corporate climate in the U.S. Postal Service which emphasizes the moving of the mail at the expense of the worker support system may only exacerbate the problem of violence in the workplace.

APWU proposes addressing the following issues through the committees identified in our collective-bargaining agreement, or through the local joint labor-management safety and health committee, address the following issues:

- Identify and correct all security safety hazards;

- Identify post offices that are at risk to crime and violence. For example, exchange money with public, working alone or in small numbers, working late at night or early morning hours, working in high-crime areas;

- Implement protective measures, provide bulletproof barriers or enclosures, install surveillance video cameras, install silent alarms, increase the number of staff on duty;

- Expand in-house security forces and increase in-house patrols and invoke passive surveillance of employee parking lots;

- Inform workers about their risk to violence;

- Gather detailed information on assaults and other acts of violence;

- Ensure all employees are properly trained in access and egress routes and emergency response procedures;

- Ensure that Inspection Service galleries are accessible to local fire and police departments;

- Analyze and evaluate injury reports, OWCP claims, to correlate safety and health hazards with injuries and illnesses.

Through the local labor-management committee, address the following:

- Solutions to minimize workplace stressors, understaffing, safety, and health hazards or oversupervision;

- Problems of excess overtime pressures on workers;

- Work assignment procedures that disrupt worker stability. For example, changes in work shifts, days off.

Through the National Labor-Management Committee, address the following:

- Staff occupational safety and health professionals on-site full-time;

- Increase occupational health nurses on-site and during peak hours;

- Staff EAP programs with experienced postal employees accessible at all times to workers.

I want to thank the committee and I'm hopeful that the present Postmaster General will take a more comprehensive institutional view of these matters and together possibly we can hope for some success. I have now worked under some 18 Postmasters General, each of whom has come in and described the quasi-military type of

culture in the Postal Service, but so far we've not had major successes in removing it. I'm hopeful that together we should be able—that's our own committee and dealing with the Postal Service on these issues—be able to resolve them or at least protect our employees.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Biller follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MOE BILLER, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION, AFL-CIO

Chairman Sawyer, Chairwoman Collins and members of the Subcommittee, my name is Moe Biller, and I am president of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO. The American Postal Workers Union is the largest postal union in the world, representing over 350,000 United States Postal Service workers. We thank you for inviting us to appear today before these subcommittees to present the views of the APWU on violence in the Postal Service.

Violence in the Postal Service is a daily concern to the 350,000 members of the American Postal Workers Union. Since Congress first held a joint hearing on the tragedy that occurred in Edmond, Oklahoma in 1986, there have been at least seven instances of fatal workplace violence among postal workers. Every day postal workers ask themselves, "when will the violence stop?" Until Postal Service management recognizes the fundamental problems inherent in their system of management, this question will remain unanswered. Management styles, attitudes, and rules collectively work to create a high stress working environment that is intolerable for many employees—and may drive some workers over the edge. With the focus of the Clinton Health Care Reform proposal on prevention, Postal Service management should bear in mind that the costs of job stress, productivity loss, and other long term health costs of workplace violence are factors that must be seriously considered in terms of developing effective prevention strategies. From this hearing, the APWU hopes to see substantial change and not a mere rehash of the problems identified in past hearings. We will also provide you with recommendations for change.

In testimony given last August, Postal Service management attempted to obscure the problem of violence in the Postal Service by telling those two subcommittees that the Postal Service experiences homicide rates lower than other industries and that the media exaggerates the problem. Postal Service management's comments ignore what is a very real problem and are simply another instance of management failing to understand the problem and avoiding accountability for its own actions. When we look at the statistics in their proper context rather than superficially, we see the extent of the problem of workplace violence in the Postal Service and, to some extent, its causes. The contention made by Postal Service management was not focused on any one type of violence and included all types of homicides, such as homicides caused by perpetrators outside of the workplace, convenience store robberies and liquor store holdups, as well as domestic violence which has spilled over into the workplace. These two forms of violence are primarily caused by factors outside of the workplace. While these two types of violence must also be addressed by postal management, the type of violence which is endemic to the Postal Service is internecine violence, that is, violence by and between employees and employers. Let me cite some statistics that address this issue squarely. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reports that at least 750 homicides occur each year in the workplace. Of these 750 murders, 24 are of the internecine variety. In the past decade, the Postal Service has seen 31 internecine homicides. That's an average of 3.1 per year. Thus, on an annual basis, the Postal Service accounts for 13 percent of all internecine workplace homicides nationwide. In some years, such as 1986 when 15 employees were killed, the Postal Service accounted for over 58 percent of all internecine workplace homicides in the country.

When the issue is faced squarely, what we see is not a meaningless industry-to-industry comparison, but a form of violence in the Postal Service that is reaching alarming proportions. To ignore this problem is irresponsible. To fail to act upon it is gross negligence. I find it disingenuous that Postal Service management would rely on deceptive statistics to mislead the committee into believing that the problem is not that serious. The irony of it all is that internecine violence is the one form of violence that management can do the most to correct. That would take some measure of critical introspection, acceptance of accountability, and fundamental change from the current military style of management in the Postal Service.



Although internecine violence deserves serious attention by Postal Service management, we should not overlook the gravity of the other types of violence. Postal employees are also at risk for violence of domestic or outside origin. Whenever they pick up remittances, exchange cash and deal with the public, postal workers are at risk to crime. Window clerks, motor vehicle drivers and special delivery messengers, as well as employees working in post offices proximate to high-crime areas, suffer from robbery, assault, and other violent attacks. The Postal Inspection Service has reported that violence has increased significantly during recent periods.

For example, in Brooklyn, NY, from September 1, 1993 through September 27, 1993, there have been five separate incidents of muggings and shootings in the proximity of the Brooklyn General Mail Facility. Two victims were postal employees. The lack of secure postal facilities is a problem that stems partially from understaffing of postal police and security officers, poor maintenance of locked doors and exits, and the lack of other safety precautions. The addition of security outside the post office and in employee parking areas is an unresolved issue between the union and the Postal Service which must be addressed. When the union asks for postal security police, we are told that management will request that already overburdened local police forces increase their patrols. Few, if any, post offices control access or use passive surveillance measures, such as video-camera monitoring.

As the risk of violence in society increases, the Postal Service must be accountable for security measures to meet the realities of an armed society to ensure the safety and health of their employees. Moreover, the threat of outside violence contributes to stress and tension in the workplace, exacerbating the problem of internecine violence.

Management's proposed remedies for violence in the workplace fail to offer any real hope of a solution to all three types of workplace violence and ignore the recommendations of the experts on occupational violence. Suggestions of pre-employment screening, employee profiling, focus groups, and other "blame-the-worker" tactics may placate managers and supervisors, but the APWU will not stand for inaction anymore. Violence in the Postal Service must be addressed from an organizational perspective without pinpointing blame on an individual. Management must see that the effects of management practices pervade all levels of the Postal Service. An internal post office study conducted over three years in the 1980s revealed that there were 355 assaults by workers on supervisors, and 183 assaults by supervisors on workers. Clearly, any impression that this is an individual worker problem is misguided since violence occurs in management ranks as well. Postal Service management must be held accountable for the safety and health of all its employees.

Postmaster General Runyon was correct when he characterized workplace violence as a complex issue. It is clear that the Postal Service is subject to all types of homicides and thus efforts to prevent all types of workplace violence must be sincere and not guided by the hollow platitudes that Postal Service management has been selling us for years. What we need to allay the fears of all postal employees are intervention and prevention strategies that focus on the fundamental issues of workplace violence.

#### NATIONAL RECOGNITION AND RESPONSE

Postal Service management should take some lessons from NIOSH, state governments, employers and unions who are taking major steps to address the issue of violence. Workplace violence has recently received national attention as an occupational health issue. In 1992, NIOSH released the government's first comprehensive study on the prevalence of homicide in U.S. workplaces. In light of the report, Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich promised that the study " \* \* \* would be used in Federal efforts to improve the safety and health of American workers."

To show how critical the issue of workplace violence is to the health and safety of workers and to bring congressional attention to this problem, NIOSH has agreed to allow the APWU to present at this hearing information from an upcoming document on workplace violence. To be officially released at the end of this month, this document entitled "ALERT: Request for Assistance in Preventing Homicide in the Workplace" violence and to implement protective measures. Furthermore, this NIOSH ALERT document calls for researchers to collect detailed information on workplace homicides. For our purposes at this hearing, the APWU points out that the NIOSH ALERT document does not recommend any of the intervention strategies that the Postal Service is implementing. The importance of this NIOSH document is clear. Employers must recognize workplace homicide as an occupational health issue demanding serious attention that warrants effective intervention measures. Viable solutions to workplace violence are available and have been implemented by state around the country.

Not only has the federal government recognized that violence in the workplace is a serious problem but state governments have also taken steps to prevent and control occupational violence. The California Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the New Jersey Department of Labor have set guidelines for ensuring the security and safety of certain sectors of workers. The APWU hopes that federal OSHA will follow suit and begin to cite employers under the General Duty Clause for failure to provide a workplace free from recognized threats of violence.

In response to the growing incidence of workplace violence, I appointed the APWU Committee on Safety and Violence to review the problems concerning safety and violence in the Postal Service and to take appropriate action when violence occurs. This Committee has developed guidelines for our local unions to follow in response to violence or threats of violence. We are encouraging our local unions to make issues of security and safety topics for the Local Joint Labor-Management Safety Committee to address. For example, the Local Safety Committee must ensure that all building aisles which lead to exits are accessible, make all employees aware of access and egress routes, ensure that the local police and fire departments can gain access to the post office during emergencies, and explore preventative measures against crime, such as installing bullet-proof glass for window clerks or using armed guard services when picking up remittances. The APWU is also encouraging locals to offer workshops on stress and how to recognize the health effects caused by stress in the workplace. When violence occurs in the workplace, the APWU will provide instruction for implementing post-response actions. To gain a more thorough understanding of internecine violence, the APWU has requested NIOSH to offer recommendations for solutions.

#### POSTAL SERVICE MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE TO WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

When faced with adversity, the first step is recognizing the problem. For the Postal Service, management took that first step when they acknowledged last August that the "stresses and tensions" in the workplace need to be removed. By associating stress with workplace violence, Postal Service management identified one of several factors that may contribute to internecine violence. Postal Service management is not alone in its thinking; experts on stress and violence also believe that a tense working environment may cause violent behavior in anyone working in an oppressive atmosphere.

Psychotherapists, psychologists, and post trauma consultants to the Postal Service presented a paper at a 1992 conference on stress in the workplace based on the results of their experience providing mental health intervention to employees. Led by James Zender, Ph.D., the Postal Service consultants contended that workplace factors are too often overlooked as a precipitating factor in workplace violence. Dr. Zender and his colleagues add that a factor in the workplace that frequently serves as a "festering precipitant" to physical violence is "emotionally injurious Labor Management/Human Relations practices." Furthermore, based on their examinations of postal employees, Dr. Zender and his colleagues believe that " \* \* \* any healthy person might be expected to become violent given the oppressive environment" to which postal workers are exposed.

Stress and subsequent violence in the Postal Service are not always in the form of homicidal shootings, but also manifest themselves in suicides, assaults, and stress related disorders, such as cardiovascular disease. Less than a year ago, three postal employees committed suicide within a three-month period in Des Moines, Iowa. Although suicides are not recorded by the Postal Service as being occupationally related, members of victims' families will testify that the work environment was a contributory factor in driving their loved ones to take their own lives. In 1990, Dr. Janet Cahill, a psychologist with Rowan College of New Jersey, conducted an extensive study on mail handler job stress. From this study, she concluded that mail handlers experience high levels of stress-related symptoms along with low levels of job satisfaction and supervisory support, which puts them at risk for serious stress-related disorders. The consensus is that the overall problem of violence in the workplace is pervasive, systemic and is not simply a matter of a few workers "going off the deep end." Thus, management's proposals for screening and profiling workers utterly fail to address the root causes of violence in the workplace.

What we need to do is examine the Postal Service as an organization and look at the conditions in the workplace that may lead to violence. These Congressional sub-committees have previously heard about the quasi-militaristic management style which fosters an adversarial relationship between workers and managers. This antiquated management philosophy is described in a 1989 GAO Report on Postal Service discipline as "the traditional approach to discipline \* \* \* based on the theory that \* \* \* productivity can be achieved and maintained \* \* \* through a system



of ever-increasing degrees of punishment." Harassment and intimidation are inbred into the system. The result is the overuse of disciplinary actions to punish and control employees. The only recourse workers have is the grievance/arbitration process. Over 100,000 grievances are filed nationwide each year. Of these, no more than 2,500 result in arbitration awards. For many postal workers, the delays and frustrations inherent in the grievance and arbitration process means delays in paychecks and consequently, missed house, car, and child-care payments. Contrary to fundamental principals of justice and fairness, the presumption among Postal Service managers and supervisors is that the complaining worker is guilty until proven innocent. Economic punishments through disciplinary action, suspensions and firings do not make for effective management.

Another measure of the Postal Service work environment is the comprehensive employee opinion survey conducted in 1992 by the Postal Service. The results showed what the APWU has contented all along—that while employees are generally satisfied with wages, benefits and to some extent, job security, they are not satisfied with issues that pertain to the work environment, job satisfaction, and organization and communication practices. Sixty-one percent of bargaining unit employees agreed that the amount of stress in their jobs is a problem. Half of bargaining unit employees do not believe that the Postal Service treats employees with respect and dignity. As anyone with military experience could tell you, abusive management and poor morale result in inefficiency and conflict.

The strategies of intervention outlined by Postal Service management last August do not take into account the responses from their own survey. Seventy-two percent of non-bargaining employees and 76 percent of bargaining unit employees believe that the Postal Service spends more time on "quick fixes" than addressing the underlying problems. And that is exactly what they are doing through their proposed strategies of pre-employment screening, profiling, and focus groups. These "remedies" are not more than a Band-Aid on a large, festering sore.

In the previously mentioned publication, ALERT, NIOSH presents many measures to reduce the risk of and to prevent occupational homicides. NIOSH declines to recommend the use of pre-employment screening and profiling. The use of these strategies depicts the classic management response to safety and health problems—blame the worker. We've seen this management response to other occupational health issues, from accidents and injuries to carpal tunnel syndrome. The APWU views employee pre-employment screening and profiling as a red herring to draw attention away from the long-standing, inbred organizational problems confronting the Postal Service.

Another misguided strategy the Postal Service is employing is the use of focus groups to foster communication between workers and managers. The APWU vehemently opposes the use of focus groups that venture outside the traditional labor-management collective bargaining agreement. APWU's reluctance to participate in these focus groups activities may be criticized by some, but we see such focus groups as begging the questions of problem identification and solutions to workplace violence. Focus groups are nothing new. The Postal Service has been using them for the last 70 years in an attempt to circumvent union representation of workers on issues affecting wages, hours, and working conditions. In the 1920's, the Postmaster General established the National Welfare Council to improve "working conditions and [to bring about] \* \* \* closer cooperation and better understanding among the public, the officials, and the employees of the Postal Service." Does this sound familiar? Seventy years and no results later, we are still hearing the same thing from Postal Service management.

Employees do not believe that focus groups are an effective strategy for preventing workplace violence. In the Employee Opinion survey, 54 percent of bargaining-unit employees did not believe that management listens to their problems, complaints, or ideas. Sixty-four percent of bargaining unit employees feel that management does not act on their problems, complaints, or ideas. Fifty-eight percent of bargaining unit employees are reluctant to even reveal problems or errors to management. If so many employees feel this way, focus groups cannot be a viable solution. An appropriate reaction for Postal Service management would be to at least recognize that further examination of problems and solutions is necessary.

Once Postal Service management identifies problems and recommends solutions, it must communicate its plans to all levels of management, supervisors and employees. For such a huge bureaucracy as the Postal Service, this is not always an easy task. Postal Service management is famous for its inability to enforce safety and health policies in the field. The current corporate culture provides no clear incentives to change—managers and supervisors are only accountable to higher officials when productivity standards are not met. Managers and supervisors are rewarded only for "getting the mail out" and their success is too easily measured by produc-



tion levels. Poor human relation skills are deemed okay as long as production is high. The current methods of achieving high production create human relations problems between workers and managers, particularly in the current "downsized" environment where many postal operations are understaffed and overtime is the quick fix to maintain production. Postal Service management spoke of obtaining feedback from workers. But, in the wake of massive restructuring and the subsequent increased pressure to move the mail, the last thing a supervisor wants is to be evaluated by employees. The APWU advocates immediate use of supervisor evaluations by employees. Moreover, unless manager and supervisor evaluations are directly tied to economic incentives, such as raises and promotions, then the evaluations will simply be another exercise in futility.

As a union, we intend to pursue solutions to the problem of workplace violence. We further intend to protect the contractual rights of our members through the current system. The APWU looks forward to the day when management chooses to negotiate with the union on issues that affect workers. The Postal Service management policy to reduce all postal operations except those directly affecting the processing and delivery of mail (e.g., the elimination of postal security services, occupational health nurses, human resources, Employee Assistance Programs and safety and health professionals) is seed which will bear bitter fruit. The current corporate climate in the United States Postal Service which emphasizes moving the mail at the expense of the workers' support system will only exacerbate the problem of violence in the workplace.

The APWU proposes addressing the following issues through the committees identified in our Collective Bargaining Agreement.

I. Through the Local Joint Labor-Management Safety and Health Committee, address the following issues:

- a. Identify and correct all security and safety hazards, under the auspices of the Joint Labor-Management Safety Committee.
- b. Identify post offices that are at risk to crime and violence (e.g., exchange money with public, working alone or in small numbers, working late night or early morning hours, working in high-crime areas).
- c. Implementing protective measures (e.g., provide bullet-proof barriers or enclosures, install surveillance video cameras, install silent alarms, increase the number of staff on duty).
- d. Expand in-house security forces and increased in-house patrols and invoke passive surveillance of employee parking lots.
- e. Inform workers about their risk to violence.
- f. Gather detailed information on assaults and other acts of violence.
- g. Ensure all employees are properly trained in access and egress routes and emergency response procedures.
- h. Ensure that Inspection Service galleries are accessible to local fire and police departments.
- i. Analyze and evaluate injury reports (OWCP claims) to correlate safety and health hazards with injuries and illnesses.

II. Through the Local Labor-Management Committee, address the following:

- a. Solutions to minimize workplace stressors (e.g., understaffing, safety and health hazards, over-supervision).
- b. Problems of excessive overtime pressures on workers.
- c. Work assignment procedures that disrupt workers' job stability (e.g., changes in work shifts, days-off).

III. Through the National Labor-Management Committee, address the following:

- a. Staff occupational safety and health professionals, on-site, full-time.
- b. Increase occupational health nurses, on-site and during peak hours.
- c. Staff EAP programs with experienced postal employees, accessible at all times to workers.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you very much, Mr. Biller. This is a very comprehensive testimony.

Before I ask you any questions, I'd like to recognize the cochairman of this joint hearing, Hon. Thomas Sawyer from the State of Ohio.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

I would like to forego making an opening statement at this point. I've begun the hearing and, as you know, some of us are supposed to be in several places at one time. So, I appreciate your leadership and conduct of this hearing and your patience in my getting here.

Just let me say by way of observation that violence in the workplace is not unique to the Postal Service but it is a very special kind of setting. There's an opportunity for greater control and collaboration among employees and managers in that kind of setting. So, I believe that while many other kinds of workplaces may experience higher levels of violence than even the experience that we've had and has caused deep concern within the Postal Service, if the lessons that we can learn from this setting may not only be important for the setting that we're talking about today, but those lessons can have applicability all across the country.

In the last analysis, a safe and secure workplace is not a fringe benefit, it's what we all have the right to expect. So, I'm grateful for these hearings. I appreciate the work that we have done together and I thank you for your patience.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Thomas C. Sawyer follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. THOMAS C. SAWYER, REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS  
FROM THE STATE OF OHIO

Good morning. Welcome to our second joint hearing, with the Subcommittee on Postal Operations and Services, to review concerns about violence in the United States Postal Service. I want to thank my co-chair, Congresswoman Barbara-Rose Collins, for her continuing contribution in preparing for these hearings.

During the last decade, ten tragic incidents have claimed the lives of 34 postal employees (including the assailant in some cases). These numbers highlight the need to examine the factors that contribute to violence in the postal workplace.

Today, we want to look at practices and procedures that are Service-wide in nature, and that present the opportunity for broad-based change and remedy where necessary. Since our first hearing, postal employees from across the country have contacted my subcommittee to express their concerns about potentially volatile situations in their facilities. Some of those letters will be made a part of the hearing record. Our purpose today is to identify common concerns and discuss effective solutions.

Violence in the workplace is not unique to the Postal Service. In fact, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) there were 2.2 deaths per 100,000 workers in the postal workplace from 1980 through 1989, compared to 7.0 deaths per 100,000 all workers in the United States. I believe that the country, as a whole, can learn a great deal from how the Postal Service combats this problem. Lessons learned and corrective actions could be broadly applied in other work settings.

I believe that a safe workplace is not a fringe benefit. It is an integral part of a productive work environment. Postal employees deserve a workplace that is productive and secure, and offers dignity and respect at all times.

Our witnesses today represent the backbone of the Postal Service. Clearly, the agency must have the cooperation and support of postal employees as it seeks to control and mitigate factors from within that contribute to threats or actual instances of violence.

I am committed to working with all of the parties involved to ensure that the Postal Service is a safe and humane place to work.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Sawyer.

Mr. Biller, I'm not going to ask you a lot of questions, but I notice in your testimony, in your written testimony that you're very much opposed to the focus groups that the Postmaster General is putting a lot of emphasis on, a lot of expectations that these focus groups will somehow or other alleviate the violence or stop the violence in the workplace.

Do you want to speak on that a little bit more, on why you're so much opposed to them or why you think they'll be ineffective?

Mr. BILLER. Well, quite obviously, they've served no constructive purpose. The results coming out of them don't really lead to any possible solutions. I think, again, one of the concepts is, I guess it's

the worker's fault, the attitude particularly by management that may be the fault of the workers or a few crackpots coming into the post office and screaming and stuff like that. But that does not deal with the basic problem of what goes on in the institution. I think a lack or underestimation of the type of stress that goes on in the Postal Service, not only in terms of the employers, not only in terms of their hours, but rather in terms of the automation, the noise, and all of the activities, there's a lot of stress in getting the mail out.

Now, admittedly, there obviously are other companies that have stress problems too outside the Postal Service. Naturally being a governmental agency it may attract more attention when these things happen, but the realities are that they continue to happen not only within the Postal Service, but for employees that, for example, drive vehicles around on the street or in your parking lots, so that the problem is genuinely serious.

The previous Postmaster General had organized a large group of all of the organizations and we attended one or two meetings. Frankly speaking, our views were that this was kind of a gimmick. It was a good PR thing, but was going nowhere. Consequently, we pulled out of that and have since formed our own committee. But again, if the Postal Service is serious in this matter, I think we can work with them in attempting to resolve this. But again, removing security and not having sufficient detection materials certainly, I think, encourages that type of thing, particularly when people report at all hours of the day and night. But I think those things are important.

Obviously there have been constrictions, regretfully, which were even opposed by the Congress of the United States in the reduction of the budget, the payments that have to be made. These have always been serious matters of concern to both us and the Postal Service. I think that should be made a note of, too, because it has been used as an excuse or a reason for reducing security lights and et cetera, and that's important.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you very much.

Mr. William R. Brown, Jr., president, National Rural Letter Carriers Association. Welcome, Mr. Brown.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman, and members of both subcommittees, my name is William R. Brown, Jr., and I am president of 83,000 members of the National Rural Letter Carriers Association. I welcome the opportunity to share my views on the causes, preventions, and progress on violence in the workplace at the U.S. Postal Service.

All of us in the Postal Service have attempted to find solutions and put together a plan to identify dangerous workplace situations. We want to prevent further tragedies from occurring. Mention the cities of Edmond, OK, or Royal Oak, MI or Del Mar, CA, and it will send chills down the spine of most postal workers. We all ask could it happen to our facility?

The postal employment organizations and the postal management have met almost monthly since December 1991. These meetings, lasting hours at a time, are making progress an inch at a time. They are forcing management, union, and employment orga-



nizations to deal with how we conduct labor-management relations and treat each other as individuals.

Together we have listed some tools that could reduce our risks of violence: improved screening, improved training, improve discipline methods, improved communication, and early detection.

Job applicants who have a history of erratic or violent behavior should not be hired. A pre-employment review should be conducted on every applicant. The Postal Service has recently awarded a 1-year \$3.75 million contract with Policy Management Systems Comp. of Blythewood, SC, to conduct checks on job applicants on all hiring locations. They will conduct prescreening information on criminal history records, employment references, and driving records for appropriate positions.

Applicants will now be asked to sign a voluntary authorization and release form. This will allow the Postal Service to obtain necessary information about the applicant's employment history and character. Refusal could negatively effect employment opportunity with the Postal Service.

Postmaster General Runyon has been making progress in changing the culture of the Postal Service. The budget has driven the Postal Service for too many years. Now service drives the U.S. Postal Service. This has required training and retraining management and some management now continue doing what they've done for many years, but others are doing it for the first time. They are making more daily appearances on the work room floor. They are communicating with the employees on something other than discipline. This is aided because management and supervisors will be evaluated by their employees.

One of the principal items to reduce stress is in the use of discipline. We have urged the Inspection Service to be more factual and less threatening as it conducts investigations of accused employees. Managers are being empowered to make decisions and that is reducing their stress. Many managers have stopped using threats such as, "If you don't do this." I am pleased to report they are using correction, not coercion.

Much of this is due to improved communication. The Postal Service is conducting focus groups around the country so employees can inform management and all of us about their feelings on workplace climate, security, and suggestions for prevention of violence.

The Secretary of Labor, Robert Reich, has often spoken about the pronoun test. When he goes into a workplace he asks a question about conditions. If the employees reply, "They expect us to," there is a troubled workplace. If they say, "We are striving to achieve," Secretary Reich believes the employees are invested in the company's future because they say "we."

Let me tell you about the Centerville, VA, facility. Not long ago it was a troubled facility, poor morale, a lot of grievance from one facility, and management and employees were not committed to QWL/EI process because they didn't trust each other. Today if you walk into the Centerville facility it is a "we" workplace.

However, there are facilities where the signals of trouble exist today. So, at the Violence Task Force we have put together a plan for dealing with detection and intervention. When signals are found, the task force believes we should contact others at the facil-



ity to verify the conditions. We will then notify representatives at the national level of bargaining and nonbargaining employee organizations. A team will be named to conduct interviews at the facility. Finally, a plan will be put together for a flexible and coordinated response. Early detection and coordinated intervention may prevent an incident of violence.

Finally, we are all concerned that the grievance arbitration process takes too long. Anyone placed in leave without pay or termination status is subject to stress. We need to lower that anxiety. The Employee Assistance Program would be better utilized beginning at the first indication of a problem with an employee.

We should all encourage an employee to use EAP counseling program if a situation has gone to arbitration. We are striving to expedite the process, but scheduling continues to conflict with our ability to shorten the process.

The Postal Service is below the national average on homicides in the workplace, but the Task Force on Violence has no silver bullet and progress is counted in inches and not miles. Nevertheless, we continue to meet and strive mightily to eliminate the root causes of violence in our postal workplace. I owe that to all my fellow employees in the Postal Service.

Again, let me thank you for this opportunity, Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairman, and members of the committee. I would be glad to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Brown follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM R. BROWN, JR., PRESIDENT, NATIONAL, RURAL LETTER CARRIERS ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairwoman, and members of both subcommittees,

My name is William R. Brown Jr. and I am the President of the 83,000 member National Rural Letter Carrier's Association. I welcome the opportunity to share my views on the causes, prevention, and progress on violence in the workplace at USPS.

All of us in the Postal Service have attempted to find solutions and put together a plan to identify dangerous workplace situations. We want to prevent further tragedies from occurring. Mention the cities Edmond, OK or Royal Oaks, MI or Del Mar, CA and it will send chills down the spine of most Postal workers. We all ask, could it happen in my facility?

The Postal Employee organizations and Postal management have met almost monthly since December 1991. These meetings, lasting hours at a time, are making progress an inch at a time. They are forcing management, unions and employee organizations to deal with how we conduct labor management relations and treat each other as individuals.

Together we have listed some tools that could reduce our risks of violence:

- (1) Improve screening.
- (2) Improve training.
- (3) Improve discipline methods.
- (4) Improve communication.
- (5) Early detection.

Job applicants who have a history of erratic or violent behavior should not be hired. A pre-employment review should be conducted on every applicant. The Postal Service has recently awarded a one year \$3.75 million contract with Policy Management Systems Comp of Blythewood, South Carolina to conduct checks on job applicants at all its hiring locations. They will conduct pre-screening information on criminal history records, employment references and driving records—for appropriate positions.

Applicants will now be asked to sign a voluntary authorization and release form. This will allow the Postal Service to obtain necessary information about applicants employment history and character. Refusal could negatively effect employment opportunities with the Postal Service.

PMG Runyon has been making progress in changing the culture of the Postal Service. The Budget has driven the Postal Service for two many years. Now Service

drives the USPS. This has required training and re-training managers. Some managers now continue doing what they have done for years, but others are doing it for the first time. They are making more daily appearances on the work room floor. They are communicating with employees something other than discipline. This is aided because managers and supervisors will now be evaluated by their employers.

One of the principle items to reduce stress is in the use of discipline. We have urged the Inspection Service to be more factual and less threatening as it conducts investigations of accused employees. Managers are being empowered to make decisions and that is reducing their stress.

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However, there are facilities where the signals of trouble exist today. So at the Violence Task Force we have put together a plan for dealing with detection and intervention.

When signals are found the Task Force believes we should contact other at the facility to verify the conditions. We will then notify representatives at the national level of bargaining and non-bargaining employee organizations. A team will be named to conduct interviews at the facility. Finally, a plan will be put together for a flexible and coordinated response. Early detection and coordinated intervention may prevent an incidence of violence.

Finally, we are all concerned that the Grievance arbitration process takes too long. Anyone placed in leave without pay or termination status is subject to stress. We need to lower that anxiety. The Employee Assistance Program would be better utilized beginning at the first indication of a problem with an employee.

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The Postal Service is below the national average on homicides in the workplace, but the Task Force on Violence has no silver bullet and progress is counted in inches not miles. Nevertheless, we continue to meet and strive mightily to eliminate the root causes of violence in our postal workplaces. I owe that to all of my fellow employees in the Postal Service.

Mr. Chairman, Madam Chairwoman, and members of the Committee I would be glad to answer any questions you may have.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Brown. I'm just going to ask you one question.

Has the contracting out of the Employee Assistance Program by the Postal Service caused any negative reactions?

Mr. BROWN. In some places it has, Madam Chairman, because they don't have anybody in place where there should be. Some of those people that were in place, they were good counselors, they had their heart in it because of the way that they got that position and people trusted them more than they will some of these contractors.

Miss COLLINS. Because they were in-house they were more trusted.

Mr. BROWN. Right, and they were postal employees and they had to be alcoholic or something to be one of these counselors that recovered. People trusted them more.

Miss COLLINS. Mr. Sawyer, do you have any questions at this time?

Mr. SAWYER. Madam Chairman, I think I'll wait and address my questions to the whole panel. Thank you.

Miss COLLINS. Fine.

Thank you, Mr. Brown.

Next, we have William Quinn, president of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union.

Welcome, Mr. Quinn.

Mr. QUINN. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

My name is William Quinn. I am president of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, AFL-CIO. We represent more than 40,000 members nationwide.

I'm accompanied here today by Secretary-Treasurer Mark Gardner.

First I want to thank you for all this important meeting with your colleague, Congressman Sawyer. The meeting is particularly relevant for my members. Due to their work on the loading docks, we represent some employees most vulnerable to physical attack. As you may recall, the assailant in Royal Oak, MI, entered via the loading dock area.

I wish to focus my testimony on several areas which, unlike some of the long-range problems, could be resolved immediately. My first point is directly related to mail handlers' vulnerability—incomplete facility security. Just as water seeks its lowest level, crime seeks its easiest entry point. Often that is the gate through which vehicles and employees often enter. There are 40,000 postal facilities and too many have lax security at the gates or docks. Beefing up security is important because it also prevents theft of postal equipment.

But there are personnel problems as well. Many aspects of those problems were detailed in last year's committee study on Royal Oak. I wish to address a few of those recommendations which could have easily been implemented last year.

Management knows who the problems are among their own ranks. I'm not referring to managers and supervisors who are "hard, but fair." I'm talking about those who are abusive toward employees yet are protected by the old boys network. I remember that even an NAPS official complained about the supervisor at Royal Oak who was abusive toward employees.

I am encouraged by the Postmaster General's testimony at your August hearing in which he indicated a desire to root out those people and change the culture which promotes those attitudes. Unfortunately, our members do not see that happening. The Postmaster General should know that his good intentions are often thwarted by the prevailing attitude among management, "He," meaning the PMG, "too shall pass."

One way to shake that managerial complacency is to make a dramatic change in accountability. Just as not making the budget numbers can result in discipline of managers, so too should poor interpersonal relations with employees. As Vince Sombrotto, the president of the National Association of Letter Carriers, testified last September, we await the day when equal justice is handed out to a supervisor who physically intimidates an employee or for the



day when supervisors report their colleagues who sexually harass craft employees. Whereas our members are immediately yanked out of line when they threaten a supervisor, it is rare, if ever, that similar action is taken against supervisors.

I would like the Postmaster General, now that his downsizing plan has been set in motion, to direct that same intellect and energy toward the postal culture. The Postmaster General's personal leadership is the key to diffusing the climate of fear which exists in too many facilities.

We need mobile crisis management teams which could diffuse potential problem sites. Let's not wait for results from focus groups and outside experts. Even a cursory rereading of the committee's Royal Oak report will provide 90 percent of the information that expensive, time consuming focus groups will develop.

Finally, let's figure out the mission of the Postal Inspection Service. Postal inspectors simply are not trained to psychoanalyze potential violent situations. For example, at Royal Oak, the Inspection Service conducted a routine investigation and even worked with the local police, but they did not comprehend that there was a potential crisis, nor did they know how to act. While the deaths were tragic, the larger tragedy is that the violence could have been avoided.

Madam Chairwoman, these are but a few suggestions for immediate action. As a participant of the joint management-labor violence panel, the Mail Handlers Union is willing to take the next steps toward diffusing the current climate.

Thank you. I will be glad to answer any questions you may have. [The prepared statement of Mr. Quinn follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WILLIAM QUINN, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL POSTAL MAIL HANDLERS UNION, LIUNA, AFL-CIO

Madam Chairwoman. My name is William Quinn. I am President of the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (AFL-CIO), which represents more than 40,000 members nationwide.

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I wish to focus my testimony on several areas which, unlike some of the long-range problems, could be resolved immediately. My first point is directly related to Mail Handlers vulnerability; incomplete facility security. Just as water seeks its lowest level, crime seeks its easiest entry point. Often, that is the gate through which vehicles and employees often enter. There are 40,000 postal facilities, and too many have lax security at the gates or docks. Beefing up security is important because it also prevents theft of postal equipment.

But there are personnel problems as well. Many aspects of those problems were detailed in last year's committee study on Royal Oak. I wish to address a few of those recommendations which could have been easily implemented last year:

Management knows who the problems are among their own ranks. I am not referring to managers and supervisors who are "hard, but fair". I'm talking about those who are abusive toward employees, yet are protected by the "Old Boys" network. I remember that even a NAPS official complained about the supervisor at Royal Oak who was abusive toward employees. I am encouraged by the Postmaster General's testimony at your August hearing, in which he indicated a desire to root out those people and change the culture which promotes those attitudes. Unfortunately, our members do not see that happening. The Postmaster General should know that his good intentions are often thwarted by the prevailing attitude among management: "He (the PMG), too, shall pass".

One way to shake that managerial complacency is to make a dramatic change in accountability; just as not making "the budget numbers" can result in discipline of managers, so too should poor interpersonal relations with employees. As Vince Sombrotto testified last September, we await the day when equal justice is handed out to a supervisor who physically intimidates an employee, or for the day when supervisors report their colleagues who sexually harass craft employees. Whereas our members are immediately yanked out of the line when they threaten a supervisor, it is rare—if ever—that similar action is taken against supervisors.

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Madame Chairwoman, these are but a few suggestions for immediate action. As a participant on the joint management-labor violence panel, the Mail Handlers Union is willing to take the next step towards diffusing the current climate.

Thank you, and I would be glad to answer any questions you may have.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you very much.

Mr. Quinn, have you witnessed any changes in security since the Royal Oak shootings?

Mr. QUINN. Not really, Madam Chairwoman. If anything, it seems to me that postal management is more intent on reducing the postal security force and thereby exacerbating the problem.

Miss COLLINS. What is the union's position on pre-hire screening?

Mr. QUINN. Well, obviously we'd be interested in having a closer background check on employees. The current employees, as Congressman Sawyer stated, have every right to expect a violence-free workplace. It would seem to me when the Postal Service has some indications that something might be awry in an employee's past work history that there should be a thorough investigation conducted.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you.

Mr. Sawyer.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

After the Royal Oak incident, this committee made some recommendations. In your various testimony you have talked about and touched on some of those recommendations. Let me just share those with you and ask you to suggest to me your one or two candidates in each of your cases for where we need to stress most, where we need to make the greatest additional effort. We talked about the review process for applicants, as you have, the effective use of discipline, the security at facilities with loading docks, agreed-upon labor-management procedures to address threats as well as incidents of violence, improved grievance and arbitration procedures. Where do we need to concentrate most at this point? Each of you in turn.

President Biller.

Mr. BILLER. I'm sorry, I didn't hear your last question. I apologize.

Mr. SAWYER. I'm asking you to identify the one or two areas of recommendations that this committee had made that you believe that there needs to be the greatest additional effort in.

Mr. BILLER. Well, several things. The efforts to reduce stress and additional security—I think reliance merely on mechanical devices is not just that type of a deterrent. As a matter of fact, there's an article in one of the papers that I have here on an incident that took place some months ago—last week, sorry, at a Greenburg, PA, facility where—just to read this now, this is a mail handler talking.

A group of us were going down and saw a man on the floor. He was looking for somebody. He kept asking for his name. I was really caught off guard. There's this guy with a gun. The man was later identified. His name was Mr. Moshe of Yorktown. He wandered through the mail processing facility between 5 and 10 minutes on October 3rd, police said. As the night shift supervisor called police, several or more than 30 workers ran from the building.

But in the aftermath of the thing, it was pointed out that what they said was a total lack of security at the annex. Here is an individual, a total stranger with a gun, roaming around 5 to 10 minutes and lots of things can happen.

Mr. SAWYER. So you would list employee assistance particularly with regard to stress and security.

Mr. BILLER. Absolutely.

Mr. SAWYER. Yes. Mr. Brown.

Mr. BROWN. I think what would help if there's some way we could do it is whenever an employee is being disciplined, maybe a removal, if there's some way that we could speed the process up to have the hearing quicker than what we do. I feel if somebody were to walk up to me this morning and say, "You're fired," and I go through the grievance procedure and I've got my family to care for, I've got my bills to care for, that's going to cause me to react different than I would normally. The longer that's put off, I believe it will cause a person to do something maybe he'd be sorry for.

Mr. SAWYER. Justice delayed is justice denied.

Mr. BROWN. Right.

Mr. SAWYER. Mr. Quinn.

Mr. QUINN. As I alluded to earlier, I believe a thorough pre-employment screening is essential. I think two of the other problems deal with discipline and stress in general. With discipline, I think the Postal Service has a proclivity to throw the baby out with the bath water. When some individual who may be a legitimate problem is removed and the Postal Service gets a favorable decision, it seems to me that they go spastic about that decision and turn all their artillery to people who have nowhere near the severity of the problem of the original grievant. Of course, stress has been a particularly meaningful commodity in this problem.

I think one of the problems that the Postal Service has been encountering for a number of years now is poorly trained supervision. The fact is a number of years ago when the Postal Service exceeded an arbitration in establishing a two-tier salary structure, many employees, to avoid the two tiers, went immediately into management. Quite frankly, they didn't have the experience nor the knowledge to ascend to a supervisory position. As a result many of those particular supervisors are trying to camouflage their lack of ability in running an operation that is totally fascist in nature.



Mr. SAWYER. There you go using those technical terms again.

Mr. QUINN. Which ones?

Mr. SAWYER. Those technical terms, spastic and fascist. But you make your point clearly. I appreciate that.

Madam Chairman, may I have one further question?

Miss COLLINS. Yes.

Mr. SAWYER. I think maybe the biggest dilemma that you represent, that you face as people who represent large numbers of employees is the circumstance where both you and your representatives within the individual workplaces and management identify a particular problem or threat of a problem that's right on the threshold of exploding into real violence. Sometimes the cause is quite removed from the people that are engaged in that, but all too often I suspect that you're confronted with the dilemma of having to work with a management that may not understand fully the genesis of a problem, on the one hand. You may have to represent the interests of both the employee who feels threatened and a colleague, a co-worker who is perceived as posing a threat.

That's a volatile circumstance. It's one that really calls for enormous levels of cooperation between employee representatives in the workplace and the people that have been asked to manage and supervise them. You're caught right in the middle having to deal with both sides of the immediate source of the problem.

Are there uniform procedures in place? Is this an arena that we ought to focus greater effort on? Is there training that is common both to those who represent employees and those who are called upon to supervise them, to deal with the kind of circumstance I described?

Mr. BROWN. Mr. Chairman, in this meeting that we've had ever since 1971, there's violence in the workplace. We have put in place a committee, one from each management and from the bargaining and non-bargaining and we're going to take them through a 2-day training. If we have a place that we think that fits what you just described, we will send this team in and they will go in if you want to call it as an open mind, they will go in and they will interview and try to find out what the situation is and try to do something to eliminate it.

Now, from the standpoint of the last 2 years, that's what I've been doing along with the other bargaining and nonbargaining postal people. Sometime that comes to my attention, which I just got one, I just left my office, and it's a file of what's taken place in a facility. Now, I'm the first to say that you can't believe everything you read in here. So, I do a little investigation. I call back the people that work in that facility, and even some people outside of that facility to see if they know anything about it. If it's something that I think needs to be brought to attention, I write a letter to each one of the presidents of the organization and say, "Look, here's a package of file that something needs to be looked into and they'll send somebody along and I'll send somebody and they'll go in and interview these people." We've been working like that. It's like you said, it's caught us in between.

But the thing about it now, I've told my people and my members, we are here to stop somebody from getting killed. Let's go in and let's look at the situation and see can't we take care of it. So far

it's worked. We have had to remove some of my people to another facility and also a manager to another facility to take care of things like that.

Mr. SAWYER. Other comments? I tell you, I'm—the question is provoked by the circumstance at Dana Point where one employee made a threat against another. The employee was, I believe, terminated and the dilemma that the letter carriers faced in that circumstance, both representing the interest of the employee who was terminated and seeking to protect the security of the employee who had been threatened is a terrible dilemma. I suspect that that's not the kind of thing that necessarily can resolve itself to the highest levels of leadership of the organizations in every circumstance and may require a level of training and in cooperative endeavor between managers and worker representatives that goes beyond anything that's in place right now.

I would hope that all of us could give some thought to how we go about dealing with that particular circumstance. You're in a terrible dilemma in trying to represent both sides.

Mr. BILLER. I wonder if you would want to hear a response from William Burris, our executive vice president who deals with this very problem.

Mr. SAWYER. Sure. Thank you.

Mr. BURRIS. Yes, Mr. Chairman. The American Postal Workers Union does not view the circumstances you described as a dilemma. We recognize it more as a challenge. We challenge and train our representatives to be professional in their approach of representation. As you indicated, we have both the responsibility to the aggressor and that person that is the recipient of violence. It does represent a challenge. Our approach is that if a person represents a threat to themselves or their coworkers, they need assistance. We fight to protect the employment of that employee, but we want to reach out and provide some assistance. We don't think as citizens of this country that we've met our responsibility if we turn that individual out into the public sector, no longer a postal employee, no longer with economic assistance or income and to be employed by some other employer and still wreak some violence on the employees at that workplace.

So, we are attempting to put in place and we'll be reaching out to the Postal Service to coordinate with us a program of providing assistance to such employees that find themselves in circumstances where they pose a threat to themselves or other employees. But we see it as a challenge and we try to train our representatives that they have the tools needed to meet those challenges.

Mr. SAWYER. I thank you for that very thoughtful answer. It really does go to the heart of what we all ought to mean by employee assistance programs and the real promise that they offer for both the employees of every kind and for enlightened management. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Miss COLLINS. I'd like, Mr. Burris, if you would identify yourself for the record.

Mr. BURRIS. William Burris, the executive vice president, American Postal Workers Union.

Miss COLLINS. Well, I guess most of our questions have been answered. I want to thank you very much for coming to the hearing. We heard from management at the last hearing and it was very important that we heard from the representatives of the employees.

The next hearing will be Tuesday and that will be—will that be the employees themselves? A continuation. All right. So, this panel then will be dismissed and we'll prepare for panel No. 2 where we will hear from James Christie, president of Postal Police Officers.

Mr. SAWYER. Madam Chairman, if I could again say thank you to this panel and to suggest that we may have additional questions that we might want to submit in writing from both subcommittees. If they'd be prepared to respond, we'd be grateful.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you.

And I want to thank you very much for taking time out to come to this hearing. Your testimonies have been very, very good, especially the written testimony. So, Mr. Sawyer is absolutely correct. Many of the Members who could not be here will probably give us written questions to send to you and I hope that you'll respond to them. Thank you.

At this time, we'll enter the statement of the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Postal Operations and Services, Hon. Don Young's statement will be entered for the record.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Don Young follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DON YOUNG, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM  
THE STATE OF ALASKA

I would like to commend the Chairwoman, Ms. Collins of the Postal Operations and Services subcommittee and Mr. Sawyer, Chairman of the Census, Statistics and Postal Personnel subcommittee, on scheduling these series oversight hearings to address the problem of violence in the U.S. Postal Service and to hear the testimony of the witnesses today. As a member of this Committee, I feel it is imperative that we exercise our oversight authority of the U.S. Postal Service and tackle this problem.

I believe at no time since I've been in Congress has the Postal Service faced as many challenges as it does today, and the issue of violence in the workforce must be resolved. I have always been a strong supporter of the Postal Service and its employees. I would like to commend the U.S. Postal Service and leadership of the various postal unions for their efforts in handling the most recent two postal tragedies.

I am a strong supporter of unions and believe that they need to help their own members and those that are outside the union should belong. The U.S. Postal Service and the postal unions must work together and not against each other to resolve problems of violence. There should be the sharing of information between management and unions and not pointing the finger when a potential problem arises.

There are people on the Floor of the House saying unions are awful and I have some labor unions saying management is awful. That doesn't accomplish anything. We should be able to work out our mutual problems. I look forward to the testimony today, and want to work with you to resolve these many problems. Thank You!

Miss COLLINS. Mr. Christie, president of the Postal Police Officers, welcome. Would you introduce your guests at the table?

**STATEMENT OF JAMES CHRISTIE, PRESIDENT, POSTAL  
POLICE OFFICERS**

Mr. CHRISTIE. Yes. I have with me today Mr. Ross Bridgman.

Miss COLLINS. You're going to have to take that mike and turn it right—yes.

Mr. CHRISTIE. Yes. I brought with me today Mr. Ross Bridgman, counsel to the Postal Police Union, and with me is Wanda Cartagena, the widow of a postal employee who was a victim of the



very violence which this hearing is about. Ms. Cartagena's husband was Guillermo Gonzalez, who was murdered in January 1992 when he and his mail truck were robbed.

Miss COLLINS. I don't know if the reporter is hearing that pretty well, but I'm not.

Mr. SAWYER. Neither am I, Madam Chairman.

Mr. CHRISTIE. Should I be speaking up?

Mr. SAWYER. No, no. It's a matter of moving the microphone closer to you. It's very directional in character and if you could move it close and then point it at your mouth. There you go. That will help a great deal. Thank you.

Miss COLLINS. Perhaps take that second mike and move it to your other side, very close to you. Even closer. That should do it. Thank you.

Mr. CHRISTIE. How am I doing now? OK. Thank you.

Appearing with me today are Ross Bridgman, counsel to the Postal Police Union and Wanda Cartagena, the widow of a postal employee who was the victim of the very violence which this hearing is about. Ms. Cartagena's husband was Guillermo Gonzalez who was murdered in January 1992 when he and his mail truck were robbed.

Miss COLLINS. Mr. Christie, your statement is very—your testimony is very comprehensive. Will you be able to synopsize it for us?

Mr. CHRISTIE. Yes. I brought a five-minute version.

Miss COLLINS. OK. Thank you very much.

Mr. CHRISTIE. Good morning, Chairwoman and Chairman Sawyer. It is indeed an honor to appear before these two distinguished subcommittees this morning to present the views of the postal police on the issue of violence in the workplace and postal facilities throughout the United States.

My name is Jim Christie and I'm the president of the Fraternal Order of Police, National Labor Council, Postal Police Union. I'm speaking this morning on behalf of the 1,500 law enforcement professionals who comprise the U.S. Postal Police force.

Violence has become an unfortunate fact of life for many Americans. However, most of us assume that when the routine of our lives take us into Federal buildings such as postal facilities, something is being done to provide sufficient security for us to carry on our business. Unfortunately, as my formal written statement makes abundantly clear, the U.S. Postal Service has not only failed to provide security sufficient to afford protection for its employees and customers, but the Service has presided over a thinly disguised effort to emasculate the ability of the postal police to perform their professional law enforcement duties.

In fact, in one truly sad incident which occurred in New York City, it is fair to say that the U.S. Postal officials, through the gross negligence of its Inspection Service, caused the death of one of our own employees.

This morning the Postal Police Union makes the following allegations against the Postal Service:

Despite efforts by many postal employees verbally and in writing to get postal police assistance and many petitions that they've signed and many reports of unsafe working conditions and hazards

that they've filed requesting postal police, the Postal Service consistently refuses to deploy postal police officers to protect employees as Congress initially intended.

The campaign of the Postal Service and its Inspection Service to undermine the postal police has exacerbated crime directed at postal employees. The efforts of the Postal Service to bust the union representing the postal police officers have and continue to needlessly expose employees and customers to random acts of violence at postal facilities around the country.

Postal Service representatives appearing before the same subcommittees in August painted a less than accurate picture of their efforts at crime prevention and how they deal with this particular union. Congress created a postal police force to protect Service employees, postal facilities, and the mails. When Congress created this police force it recognized that the Service required special police protection. Congress recognized that unlike most other Government employees who were collectively and centrally located in easily guarded buildings, many employees of the Service are more vulnerable to crime on the job. They work in small numbers at widely disbursed facilities or on an individual basis along isolated postal routes nationwide. Aggravating this vulnerability is the fact that these employees carry currency and other valuables and, while doing so, are identified by uniforms they wear and the vehicles they drive.

Taking stock of all these factors, Congress realized that armed, trained officers with full arrest powers were needed to protect postal employees, facilities and mails. Accordingly, Congress mandated the creation of the postal police force. Yet the Postal Service and Postal Inspection Service has sought to undermine congressional action and intent.

Consider the following:

Over a 20-year period, from 1972 to 1992, the Postal Service has systematically dismantled the postal police. In 1972, over 2,800 officers comprised the force. Today that number is down to under 1,500, nearly a 47-percent decrease. Over the same 20-year period, and while the incidence of crime increased, the Postal Service has systematically replaced trained police officers with private security guards who lack special arrest powers and are without professional law enforcement training. The result has been a reduction in the postal police force presence at 25 facilities and the complete elimination of any presence in 17 separate cities.

During the same timeframe, and while the postal police force was being reduced by 47 percent, the number of postal inspectors coincidentally grew by 47 percent, yet the increase of inspectors is not a significant crime deterrent because they are low profile, investigative officials who deal with crime after it happens. The inspectors are plain clothed and they frequently have their offices separate from postal facilities. In short, they have no on-site presence. They could not reasonably be expected to stop a crime before it occurs. By thwarting Congress' statutory scheme providing for a dedicated postal police force, the Postal Service has victimized its own employees.

Consider the case of Guillermo Gonzalez. On January 21, 1993, Mr. Guillermo Gonzalez, a 24-year-old postal employee, was mur-

dered on the job. In fact, Mr. Gonzalez foreshadowed his own demise. From his postal truck, Mr. Gonzalez collected and delivered mail from between various postal stations in the Bronx. He also collected cash remittances from those stations at the end of the day. Typically, Mr. Gonzalez would collect around \$100,000 during the day on these money runs.

As a result of the shooting of an employee on February 2, 1992, postal police officers escorted the postal employees making the money runs between postal stations. However, on January 6, 1992, the postal inspectors ordered the postal police to stop escorting them, to stop providing protection because, according to the Inspection Service, this protection was unnecessary.

On October 5, 1992, October 19, 1992, December 24, 1992, December 30, 1992, Mr. Gonzalez reported that two people were following him and that he feared for his life. He identified the car and described the suspects. Postal police officer reported to the postal inspectors that Mr. Gonzalez needed protection, yet the postal inspectors refused to permit the postal police to provide that protection. As the sighting of the suspicious men continued, postal police officers pleaded with postal inspectors to help Mr. Gonzalez, but the Inspection Service refused.

On January 21, 1993, at approximately 8 p.m., Mr. Gonzalez' postal truck was found in a secluded wooded area in Fort Lee, NJ, and Mr. Gonzalez was discovered shot in the head on the floor of his truck. He was pronounced dead on the scene by the Bergen County medical examiner. Mr. Gonzalez had collected approximately \$80,000 that day in cash receipts without protective escort.

Ironically, when the postal inspectors themselves went to retrieve the money, they required that two postal police officers escort them because of the high risk involved.

Recently, postal inspectors arrested Giovanni Mazaro, a former postal employee, in connection with the Gonzalez murder. Consequently, the postal inspectors have solved another crime. Another one for their statistics book, but this crime could have been prevented by properly using postal police.

The strategy of the Postal Service seems to be to make the postal police force ineffective in preventing crime by reducing its numbers, changing its name, and not allowing it to protect the employees, the public, and postal property. In that way, more crimes are committed for the postal inspectors to solve. Accordingly, more postal inspectors are hired. Job security for postal inspectors.

The Inspection Service's response to inquiries in its role in the Gonzalez murder have been anything but commendable. It has been a coverup.

I could go on with myriad examples of other violent crimes, violent criminal acts perpetrated upon postal employees due to the ineffective utilization of postal police by the Postal Service, the logical procedures required by the Service of postal police in dangerous situations, and the creative recordkeeping now being followed by the Inspection Service relative to criminal incidents. Constriction of my time here this morning, however, prohibits me from doing that now. I would simply request that the members of the subcommittees review the details contained in my written statement for the record.



These are dangerous times in which to live. It makes no sense, however, for all of us not to exercise caution and to take preventive action in order to safeguard our well-being. When it comes to postal employees, property, and the mails, the postal police are an important deterrent to be used against criminal propensity.

Our contention is simple: The Postal Service can and should be utilizing my members in a far more effective and active manner than is now the case. Such a turnabout in behavior of the Service could begin to have a positive impact on the reduction of violent crime in the postal workplace.

I find it ironic that as we discuss this morning the rapid increase of violent crime now affecting postal employees, the Postal Service is preparing to spend \$7 million on the display of a new logo. One Service official was quoted as saying, "Our new emblem is powerful and dynamic." I submit that any agency which cannot adequately take steps to protect its staff, customers, or property is neither powerful nor dynamic. Apparently, and since the Service seems to prefer ignoring a problem that won't go away, a more appropriate choice for a new emblem would have been an ostrich with its head stuck firmly in the ground, unable to see what was going on around it.

Thank you for this chance to testify and we would be pleased to answer any questions that you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Christie follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES CHRISTIE, PRESIDENT, POSTAL POLICE OFFICERS

Good morning Chairwoman Collins and Chairman Sawyer. It is indeed an honor to appear before these two distinguished subcommittees this morning to present the views of the Postal Police on the issue of violence in the workplace at postal facilities throughout the United States.

My name is Jim Christie and I am the President of the Fraternal Order of Police, National Labor Council, Postal Police Union. I am speaking this morning on behalf of the 1200 law enforcement professionals which comprise the United States Postal Police Force.

Violence has become an unfortunate fact of life for many Americans. However, most of us assume that when the routine of our lives take us into federal buildings, such as postal facilities, something is being done to provide sufficient security for us to carry out our business. Unfortunately, and as my testimony today will illustrate, the Postal Service has not only failed to provide security sufficient to afford protection for its employees and customers, but the Service has presided over a thinly-disguised effort to emasculate the ability of the Postal Police to perform their professional law enforcement duties. In fact, and in one truly sad incident which occurred in New York City, it is fair to say that the negligence of U.S. Postal Officials, through its Inspection Service, caused the death of one of their own employees.

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The Congress created a Postal Police Force to protect Postal employees, the Postal facilities and the mails. When Congress created this Police Force, it recognized that the Postal Service required special police protection. The Congress recognized that, unlike most other government employees who work collectively in centrally-located, easily guarded buildings, many employees of the Postal Service are more vulnerable to crime while on the job. They work in small numbers at widely dispersed facilities or on an individual basis on isolated postal routes throughout the country.

Aggravating this vulnerability is the fact that Postal Service employees carry currency and other valuables and, while doing so, are identifiable by the uniforms they wear and vehicles they drive. In fact, relative to other public employees, the dangerous working conditions faced by many postal employees are most closely akin to those faced by urban transit workers. Virtually every major city in the United States provides a dedicated transit police force—with full police powers that extend throughout the community—to protect its transit employees.

Like transit employees, Postal employees cannot be safeguarded by unarmed, untrained security guards whose jurisdiction is limited to Postal buildings. Postal employees cannot be protected by security guards whose only power of arrest is like that of an ordinary citizen—they must witness a crime to arrest the suspect.

The Congress knew that armed, trained police officers with full arrest powers were needed to protect the Postal employees, the Postal buildings and the Mails. The Congress knew that this police force needed the arrest powers of other police officers—to arrest suspects based on probable cause. That's why the Congress created the Postal Police Force.

Yet, the Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service have sought to undermine Congressional action and intent. The Postal Service has jeopardized the safety of its employees, the post offices and the mails by replacing Postal Police Officers with private security guards and by slashing the Postal Police Force to half its size. Why have the Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service done this?

There can be no valid reason, only animosity toward the union, the FOP-NLC. They may claim money is the reason, but over a twenty year period, they cut the Postal Police Force by about 1,400 officers and increased the number of Postal Inspectors by about 700 Inspectors. There can be no cost savings because Postal Inspectors earn twice what Postal Police Officers earn.

The effects of this action have been costly. With the cuts of Postal Police Officers, the Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service has reduced the ability of this Police Force to prevent crime. At the same time, the animosity of the Postal Service and the Inspection Service toward the FOP-NLC makes matters worse. While the Postal Service tries to bust the union, it needlessly exposes its employees, the public and the mails to crime—crime that could be prevented if the Postal Service funded and used the Postal Police Force as Congress intended.

Accordingly, to re-establish the Postal Police Force that Congress created, Congress should require that the Postal Service and the Inspection Service allocate the funds to fulfill the mission that Congress gave it.

## II. STATUTORY BACKGROUND

The laws creating the Postal Police Force manifest a Congressional intention to give Postal Police Officers full authority to protect Postal Service employees, both on and off postal property. Title 40 of the United States Code designates Postal Police Officers as "special policeman" charged with "policing of all buildings and areas owned or occupied" by the Postal Service. On such property, Postal Police Officers "have the same powers as sheriffs and constables" to enforce laws enacted to protect persons and property, prevent breaches of the peace, control assemblies, and enforce Postal Service rules and regulations. 40 U.S.C. §318.

These laws give the Postal Police Officers full-fledged police officer powers, including powers of arrest. The legislative history of the original version of Section 318 indicates that Congress intended special policeman to "possess the same powers and authority as the Metropolitan [Police] and [United States] Park Police of the City of Washington." See S. Rep. No. 1176, 80th Cong., 2d Sess., *reprinted* in 1948 U.S. Code Cong. & Admin. News 1627, 1628-29 (letter of Philip B. Fleming).

Because the statute only authorizes action "as long as [the Postal Police Officers] are in the Federal buildings and grounds thereof," *Id.*, a shortcoming may exist. Postal Service employees working off-property (e.g., mail carriers) are not protected. Yet, there is separate statutory authority for Postal Police Officers to exercise law enforcement authority off Postal Service property.

Title 18 of the United States Code authorizes "Postal Inspectors and other agents of the [Postal Service] designated by the Board of Governors to investigate criminal matters related to the Postal Service and the mails." 18 U.S.C. 3061(a) (emphasis added). Nevertheless, even this provision, in view of present Postal Inspection Service hostility, has proven insufficient as a grant authority for Postal Police Officers to protect Postal Service employees. But, this is not because of any explicit limitation in the statute's language. The provision has come up short only because it grants the Postal Service complete discretion to designate when and if Postal Police Officers may take off-property action. Inexplicably, as Congress could not have foreseen, the Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service have, at their whim, refused to allow Postal Police Officers to take law enforcement action off Postal Service property, even at the point of risking the safety of its employees.

## III. THIS POSTAL SERVICE HAS REFUSED TO DEPLOY POSTAL POLICE OFFICERS TO PROTECT POSTAL SERVICE EMPLOYEES AS CONGRESS INTENDED

Over a twenty year period, the Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service have systematically dismantled the Postal Police Force. In 1972, over 2800 officers

comprised the Postal Police Force. Now the number is down to 1500, nearly a 47% decrease.

Over this twenty-year period, while the incidence of crime increased, the Postal Inspection Service systematically replaced its trained police officers with private security guards. For example, between 1976 and 1987, the Postal Inspection Service reduced Postal Police Officers presence at 25 facilities. Moreover, the Postal Inspection Service completely eliminated Postal Police Officers in 17 cities, including Indianapolis, Columbus, Ohio, and Cincinnati. In most cases, the Inspection Service replaced the Postal Police Officers with private security. Continuing this practice, the Postal Service and the Inspection Service recently contracted with the private security companies in the following cities: Indianapolis; Newark, New Jersey; Patterson, New Jersey; Houston; San Bruno, California; Norfolk, Virginia; New York.

As a result, Postal Service employees in these cities, and others like them, have been deprived of the dedicated police protection that Congress intended to provide when it created this "special police" force. Private security guards do not have arrest powers, nor are they specifically trained to protect the mails and Postal Service employees. If, for example, a Postal Service employee on Postal Service property is assaulted and robbed, a responding private security guard cannot effect a probable cause arrest of the suspect. Unlike a Postal Police Officer, who on postal property has the same arrest powers as municipal or state police officers, a private security guard only has the arrest authority of an ordinary citizen—the guard must actually witness the crime to make an arrest.

In order to adequately substitute Postal Police Officers, the Postal Service would need to enter into an agreement with municipalities authorizing action by local officers on Postal property or hire off-duty municipal officers on a contract basis. By using the local police force, Postal Service employees and facilities would not receive from local officers the dedicated, on-site police protection that Congress intended, particularly in large cities where the police are already overburdened. Hiring local officers on an off-duty basis is also not a practical solution. These off-duty officers are expensive and difficult to find in the quantity needed by the Postal Service. For example, in New York, an off-duty NYPD officer receives about \$25 per hour and is limited to 20 hours of off-duty time per week.

Over the same twenty-year period (1972 to 1992), while the Postal Inspection Service diminished the Postal Police Force by 47%, the number of Postal Inspectors increased by about 700, an increase of 47%. Yet, this increase in Inspectors is no significant crime deterrent because Postal Inspectors are low-profile, investigative officials who investigate crime after it happens. Postal Inspectors are the plain-clothed detectives. Consequently, they do not provide on-site, uniformed police presence. In fact, Postal Inspectors offer no on-site presence whatsoever—their offices are off-site.

Inexplicably, the Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service are also reducing the police presence at Postal facilities not only by number, but by name. The Postal Service and its Inspection Service are now characterizing the Postal Police Force as a mere "security force." This labeling of Postal Police Officers as security guards poses a threat to the safety of the Postal Police Officers and hinders their ability to prevent crime. The name "security guard" as opposed to "police officer" deprives these officers of the air of authority and command presence that police officers automatically carry into any confrontation. Indeed, the Inspection Service—in an action that can only have been motivated by anti-union animus toward the FOP-NLC—has sought to make this clear to the world by recently mandating that "Security Force" rather than "Police" door decals be affixed to Postal Police cruisers.

#### IV. THE CAMPAIGN OF THE POSTAL SERVICE AND THE INSPECTION SERVICE TO UNDERMINE THE POSTAL POLICE HAS EXACERBATED CRIME DIRECTED AT POSTAL SERVICE EMPLOYEES.

By thwarting Congress' statutory scheme providing for a dedicated postal police force, the Postal Service has victimized its own employees.

Consider the case of Guillermo Gonzalez.

On January 21, 1993, Mr. Guillermo Gonzalez, a 24-year old postal employee, was murdered while on the job. In fact, Mr. Gonzalez foreshadowed his own demise.

From his postal truck, Mr. Gonzalez collected and delivered mail between various postal stations in the Bronx. He also collected the cash remittances from those stations at the end of the day. Typically, Mr. Gonzalez would collect around \$100,000 during the day on those "money runs."

During the Spring of 1992, Postal Police Officers escorted the Postal employees making the money runs between postal stations. On July 6, 1992, the Postal Inspectors ordered the Postal Police to stop escorting them to stop providing that protec-



tion because, according to the Inspection Service, this protection was "unnecessary."<sup>1</sup>

On October 5, 1992, October 19, 1992, December 24, 1992, and December 30, 1992, Mr. Gonzalez reported that two people were following him, and that he feared for his life. He identified the car and described the suspects. Postal Police Officers reported to the Postal Inspectors that Mr. Gonzalez needed protection. Yet, the Postal Inspectors refused to permit the Postal Police to provide that protection. As the sighting of the suspicious men continued, Postal Police Officers pleaded with the Postal Inspectors to help Mr. Gonzalez, but the Inspection Service refused.

On January 21, 1993, at approximately 8:00 P.M., Mr. Gonzalez' postal truck was found in a secluded wooded area in Fort Lee, New Jersey, and Mr. Gonzalez was discovered shot in the head on the floor of his truck. He was pronounced dead on the scene by the Bergen County Medical Examiner. Mr. Gonzalez had collected approximately \$80,000.00 that day in cash receipts, without protective escort.

Recently, the Postal Inspectors arrested Giovanni Rosado, a former Postal employee, in connection with the Gonzalez murder. Consequently, the Postal Inspectors solved another crime, another one for their statistics book. But, this crime could have been prevented by properly using Postal Police.

The strategy of the Inspection Service seems to be to make the Postal Police Force ineffective in preventing crime by reducing its numbers, changing its name, and not allowing it to protect the employees, the public and postal property. In that way, more crimes are committed for the Postal Inspectors to solve. Accordingly, more Postal Inspectors are hired—job security for the Postal Inspectors.

The Inspection Service's response to inquirers into its role in the Gonzalez murder has been anything but commendable. It has been to cover-up.

For more than twenty years, Postal Police Officers and their union have had free access to all incident (crime) reports generated by the officers. After the murder of Mr. Gonzalez, Inspector in Charge of New York, Lee Heath, ordered that all incident reports be suppressed from all Postal Police Officers and the FOP-NLC.

If it had not been for the incident reports concerning the murder of Mr. Gonzalez, Postal Police, postal management, and the public would not have known of the negligence of the Inspection Service. Now that these reports have been suppressed, no one will ever know of the improprieties of the Inspection Service, nor can anyone accuse this agency of negligence or other misconduct. Without these reports, the FOP-NLC has been effectively stopped from protecting its members and postal employees from the wrong-doings of the Inspection Service.

The escalation of violent crimes against postal employees since July, 1992, including the kidnap and murder of Mr. Gonzalez, has been exacerbated by the Postal Inspection Service. The Inspection Service refuses to allow its armed uniformed police force to take effective action to protect postal employees off Postal Service property.

The Gonzalez case demonstrates that Postal employees need police protection. From 1990 to 1992, New York City alone recorded 59 armed robberies of post offices. In fact, only days after the Gonzalez murder, three people robbed the Staten Island postal facility using automatic weapons, taking over \$470,000. The three armed robbers entered the facility via unsecured rear doors, at a time just before the armored car would arrive (11:45 p.m. on Sunday, February 7, 1993). The robbers went directly to the registry cage, knowing exactly where the cash was kept, and asked for the supervisor by name.

To combat the increase in violence in the workplace, the Postal Inspection Service installed a 24-hour, 800 number violence hot-line.<sup>2</sup> Postal Police Officers man this hot-line. Yet, because the Postal Service and the Inspection Service reduced the number of Postal Police Officers, we estimate that over 31,000 calls for help a year go without a response or even a report being filed.<sup>3</sup> For example, when responding to calls for help from Postal employees, the San Diego Postal Police Officers are instructed to tell the threatened Postal employee to go hide from the suspected assailants or robbers. No patrol cars respond because, according to the Inspection Service, there are not enough officers.

<sup>1</sup>The Postal Inspector's order to halt the Police escorts follows within weeks of the FOP-NLC victory over the Postal Service before the National Labor Relations Board to force a representation election so the FOP-NLC could unseat the incumbent Union. From that point, the Postal Service and the Inspection Service engaged in a course of conduct to try to bust the FOP-NLC Union. This animosity toward the FOP-NLC has caused postal employees to suffer as Postal Police are eliminated and their assignments cancelled.

<sup>2</sup>The Postal Inspection Service recently reduced the 24-hour hot-line to 18 hours, despite Chief Inspector Hunter's testimony before this committee to the contrary.

<sup>3</sup>Consequently, any statistics concerning Postal Service violence would not include some 31,000 calls for assistance.

At the Suburban Postal Facility near Washington D.C., the facility manager requested Postal Police presence because of threats and assaults. Despite this request, the Inspection Service refused to permit Postal Police to patrol the Suburban Facility because, according to the Inspection Service, there is a shortage of officers.

In and around Washington D.C., outside patrol of the following postal facilities has been canceled because of a shortage of postal Police Officers and patrol cars: Congress Heights; Anacostia; Mid-City; Brookland; T Street Station; Walbrook Station (Baltimore); Columbia Heights; Friendship Heights; Temple Hill; Woodridge; and Druid Station (Baltimore).

In New York, approximately 150 posts are vacant because of the shortage of officers. These posts were once occupied by Postal Police Officers, and, therefore, the Inspection Service must have considered them necessary then. Why does the Inspection Service consider these posts unnecessary now?

Furthermore, in an attempt to minimize the effectiveness of the Postal Police to prevent crime, the Postal Inspection Service has instituted a ridiculous "re-arrest" policy. This policy requires Postal Police Officers to relinquish custody of arrestees to Postal Inspectors, who effectuate a "re-arrest." Re-arrests amount to a thinly-veiled fraud on the constitutional rights of arrestees, who may be forced to litigate when they were placed under arrest and by whom. Additionally, by forcing Postal Police Officers to engage in the fiction that they were acting as citizens—not peace officers—the "re-arrest" policy needlessly exposes Postal Police Officers to civil liability.

An incident occurred in the Bronx where an employee had been caught removing stolen property from a postal facility. He was arrested by Postal Police, brought to headquarters, and interrogated by officers. Officers then, according to Inspection Service policy, called a Postal inspector, who told the officers to obtain a written statement from the employee. The Inspector instructed the officers to read back the statement, to ascertain if there was sufficient self-incrimination for a conviction. There was, and the Inspector then reported to the office and re-arrested the employee, and processed him based upon the self-incriminating statement.

The Postal Inspection Service also uses the re-arrest policy to underplay the amount of violent crime directed at Postal Service employees. Recently, the policy was used to cover-up a violent incident at a postal facility in New York. A Postal Police Officer was attacked with a knife. It took three armed Postal Police Officers to subdue the assailant. When the Officer reported to the Inspector, the Inspector effected a "re-arrest", reduced the crime from a federal felony of assault of a federal officer to a mere attempted assault. Because of the inaccuracies of the Inspector's "re-arrest" report, the prosecuting attorney was forced to dismiss the case, and the assailant walked free.

Further, with the increase in mail bombs,<sup>4</sup> one would think that the Postal Inspection Service would have a sensible bomb detection policy. Yet, the Inspection Service requires Boston Postal Police Officers to pick-up the suspected bomb, transport it over the public roads (specifically through Everett and Chelsea) to the main postal facility, the AMF, and then call a bomb specialist. In other words, the Postal Inspectors require that the bomb come to their bomb specialist rather than the bomb specialist going to the bomb.

#### V. THE EFFORTS OF THE POSTAL SERVICE TO BUST THE FOP-NLC HAVE NEEDLESSLY EXPOSED POSTAL EMPLOYEES TO VIOLENCE.

As noted earlier, on July 6, 1992, the Postal Inspector ordered the Postal Police to stop escorting employees on money runs. This order occurred only weeks after the FOP-NLC's victory over the Postal Service before the National Labor Relations Board to force a representation election to unseat the incumbent union. From that point, the Postal Service and the Inspection Service engaged in a course of conduct to try to bust the FOP-NLC.

The Postal Service has reduced the number of bargaining unit Postal Police Officers by about 200 since the FOP-NLC filed its election petition. The Postal Service has subcontracted with private security guards to replace positions formerly occupied by Postal Police Officers. As explained above, this practice provides inferior protection to the Postal Services employees, facilities and mails and is not the level of protection intended by the Congress when it created this "special police force."

<sup>4</sup>On December 17, 1989, a mail bomb killed Robert S. Vance, United States Court of Appeals Judge. Episodes of mail bombs have recently escalated, targeting academia. This year David Gelernter, a Yale computer scientist, and Charles Epstein, a geneticist at the University of California at San Francisco, were victims of mail bombs. Within the past few months, in the San Francisco area mail bombs injured three people.

Additionally, the Postal Service refused to provide the FOP-NLC with much needed information concerning a Postal Service Task Force that recommended that the Postal Service *eliminate* the Postal Police Force and replace it with private security guards.

Consequently, the FOP-NLC was forced to file unfair labor practice charges with the NLRB. The NLRB has now issued a complaint against the Postal Service, charging that the Postal Service has not bargained in good faith with the FOP-NLC and has refused to provide to the FOP-NLC information necessary to represent the Postal Police Officers.

Moreover, the Postal Service and the Inspection Service have excluded FOP-NLC representatives from meetings concerning postal violence and meetings between management and all of the other Union officials.

In fact, on August 5, 1993, Postmaster General Marvin Runyon testified before this very committee: "Starting at the top, we have brought our union and management associates into our weekly senior leadership meetings." Not all unions. The FOP-NLC officers are barred by the Inspection Service and the Postal Service from these meetings. Mr. Runyon further testified, "We are working with them to develop this same type of meeting in all of our major facilities across the country." The FOP-NLC is barred from these meetings as well. Additionally, Vice President Joseph J. Mahon, Jr., testified: "We give the unions an opportunity to participate in the orientation session." Not the FOP-NLC, we are excluded.

As the Postal Service and the Inspection Service continue their campaign to bust the FOP-NLC, the Postal employees and the public suffer. The Congress created the Postal Police Force to protect, but the Postal Service and the Inspection Service thwart Congressional intention by undermining the efforts of the Postal Police and their union.

#### VI. POSTAL SERVICE TESTIMONY-FACT OR FICTION

As previously mentioned, on August 5, the Postmaster General, Marvin Runyon, Postal Service Vice President Joseph Mahon, and The Chief Postal Inspector, Kenneth Hunter, testified under oath before both subcommittees on the same topic as today's hearing. I have had the opportunity to review a transcript of their remarks on that date, and I believe these gentlemen should be appropriately recognized for their contribution to the world of fiction.

Consider the testimony of Mr. Runyon when he said: "Postal Inspectors are instructed enter all threats into our data base." The truth is, what data base? As explained above, the Postal Inspectors alter crime reports (incident reports) and fail to report violence in the workplace.

Runyon Testimony: "We are about to competitively award a nationwide contract to an outside firm which will gather required criminal records, employment history and where appropriate, driving records of applicants. The use of outside expertise in this area will give us immediate access to automated information networks with established quality control procedure . . ."

The Truth: The Postal Service already has immediate access to this information through the Postal Police. By taking this job away from Postal Police, it will create a time delay between hiring the employee and the contractor getting the information. In addition, the contractor will not have the same access to information as a Law Enforcement Agency (the Postal Police). Therefore, the contractor will be unable to get as much information as not get it as quickly.

Runyon Testimony: "We will extend finger printing of new hires to include non-career selections this month. These services will be provided by the Office of Personnel Management. This will give us access to additional background information, including an FBI criminal record search."

The Truth: The Postal Police already has this. Again, this is an attempt to pass work of the Postal Police to someone else. This will also cause a time delay.

Runyon Testimony: "Equally important, we are also taking affirmative steps to change our work environment. We are improving communication, commitment and cooperation among managers, supervisors, employees and the leadership of our employee organizations."

The Truth: The Postal Service/Postmaster General has refused to have any dealings with the Postal Police or their union leadership.

Runyon Testimony: "Our top 550 executives including me, are being measured \* \* \*, the management styles of these executives will be assessed by their bosses, peers and employees."

The Truth: The FOP-NLC and Postal Police Officers are also excluded from this program.

Runyon Testimony: "If you have a problem, call a Postal Inspector."



The Truth: Postal Inspectors only work Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Who do you call after 5 p.m. and on weekends? Postal Police work around the clock. Runyon Testimony: "We have the presidents of the union come to our meetings every Tuesday with our management leadership group."

The Truth: Again, the FOP-NLC is barred from these meetings.

Mahon Testimony: "We give the unions an opportunity to participate in the orientation session."

The Truth: Not the Postal Police Union.

Hunter Testimony: "Postal Inspectors provided protection for Postal employees and are at the facilities."

The Truth: Postal Police do that, not Postal Inspectors.

Hunter Testimony: They have a 1-800 line manned by Postal Inspectors 24 hours a day.

The Truth: This 1-800 number is manned by Postal Police and is now manned 18 hours a day.

Mahon Testimony: "[T]he grievance process should begin and end in the installation where the grievances arise."

The Truth: The FOP-NLC is and has recently been denied this.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

I do not pretend that many of the facts contained in my testimony this morning will not be startling for members of these subcommittees to learn. These have been, however, the facts of life which we as Postal Police Officers have been forced to labor under in recent years.

The Postal Police believe that because the Postal Service has essentially abdicated responsibility for the efficient and effective utilization of our members, the Congress must take affirmative steps to assist the Postal Service in ensuring the safety of its employees and customers. To that end, we would recommend that Congress move quickly in the following directions:

1. Authorize and appropriate funding levels sufficient to increase the number of Postal Police Officers (not Postal Inspectors);

2. Provide sufficient funding to ensure the adequate training of Postal Police Officers at federal law enforcement training facilities; and

3. Clarify by statute the peace officer powers of the Postal Police Officers by authorizing them to make arrests off of postal property.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify this morning on behalf of my members, and I would be pleased to respond to any questions which you may have.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you very much, Mr. Christie.

In asking you to shorten your statement, there are some things, of course, left out that's in the written testimony. One is the murder—not the murder, I'm sorry, the robbery on the Staten Island postal facility on page 10 using automatic weapons, taking over \$470,000.00 days after the Gonzalez murder. Why would a post office have that kind of money, a postal facility?

Mr. CHRISTIE. The post office is a multibillion-dollar corporation.

Miss COLLINS. Say it into the mike, please.

Mr. CHRISTIE. I'm sorry. The Postal Service is a multibillion-dollar corporation. Everybody in the country buys stamps and unfortunately the criminal community has now become aware of, primarily by some of the things the post office is doing, such as their temporary 90-day employees cannot be trained, so the only skill they have is to count, so they have them count our money. We handle all money that is mailed by the Federal Reserve. We handle all our own money. Consequently, our larger facilities, our hub facilities where all the stations' money is transported to, routinely has hundreds of thousands of dollars and in some cases millions of dollars, and also millions of dollars of stamp stock, money orders, and so forth that is distributed back out to the stations is on hand at all times.

Miss COLLINS. That remains in the facilities no more than 24 hours? Some of it remains, I know, the stamps, the money orders.

Mr. CHRISTIE. Yes. The money comes in. We have facilities that generally close about 6, at which time the money is turned back into the major facilities. So, it's generally back in the major facility by 8, 9 where we have cages. In Staten Island we used to have postal police protecting that money, but it was determined that coverage wasn't needed. Then, as soon as possible, we have an armored car company come and retrieve the money. But again in Staten Island's case, the company doesn't work weekends. So, we have Friday's receipts and Saturday's receipts. The first thing Monday morning, at 10 minutes after midnight, the armored car company would have picked up the money.

Miss COLLINS. There were no postal police at that Staten Island facility?

Mr. CHRISTIE. No, we were removed from that station some time ago because it was determined we weren't necessary.

Miss COLLINS. If you were there, you couldn't have done anything against automatic weapons, but perhaps you could have made sure the rear doors were secured.

Mr. CHRISTIE. Yes. Generally people are less likely to attack an armed police officer than a group of people in a secluded area by themselves. That particular instance, we could have and would have been at the front of the building, on the perimeter. They would not have gotten even on the property.

Miss COLLINS. You also stated on page 13, you spoke about the mail bombs, the increase in mail bombs, that the Postal Inspection Service does not have a sensible bomb detection policy. Is that something the postal police would handle ordinarily, if your numbers were not being decimated?

Mr. CHRISTIE. Well, we are the ones that are actually at the post office. The postal inspectors generally rent office space privately outside of postal facilities. We're physically there. I myself, during the Goodwill Games in Seattle a few years back received some bomb training and I x rayed parcels for bombs and so forth that were going into the Olympic Village. So, our officers have had some training in that area. The Inspection Service policy on bombs is something that someone made up without taking into regard current police bomb squad policies and procedures. Somebody just said, "Well, let's do it this way," and there was not a lot of research or thought put into the plan.

Miss COLLINS. OK. I have two more points. One was I read somewhere in your testimony that you were—the postal police were told not to receive—oh, I'll find it later.

But my second question was that in July 6, 1992, the postal inspector ordered the postal police to stop escorting employees on money runs. So, it doesn't matter how much money they're transporting, there's no escort?

Mr. CHRISTIE. That's correct. It's determined again that we weren't necessary.

Miss COLLINS. Mr. Sawyer.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Let me just offer—that story about Mr. Gonzalez is chilling. Let me offer our official condolences and personal sympathy. Remarkable story.

I used to be the mayor of a city of a little less than a quarter of a million. It doesn't come close to the size of the employment force of the U.S. Postal Service, although my problems were more concentrated in Akron, OH, than the diffuse security problems that the Postal Service confronts on a 24-hour a day basis.

But even at that, one of the things that I thought made sense for my public safety forces was the importance of integrated training, some common ground between those people who functioned as patrolmen on the street providing a sense of presence and security for a population of a quarter of a million and those people who were charged with investigating crime. In other words, the roles that are fulfilled by the people you represent and the roles that are provided by the Postal Inspection Service and others were really an integrated force.

I don't presume to second guess the Postal Service on how to manage their security and safety forces, but it seems to me that even if they don't want to have an integrated force where there is promotion from a common base, that there surely ought to be a common ground for training.

Can you describe for us the degree to which you have common training and the degree to which you don't?

Mr. CHRISTIE. Yes. We start off, inspectors and postal police alike, at an academy in Potomac, MD. Both inspectors and postal police go through an initial 4-week training that is identical. Postal inspectors then go on to second weeks of accounting, administrative training, which I believe now has been expanded to 8 weeks. Both groups will go back to the field where they are to receive the same individualized state training, defensive tactics, hot stops, and things along those lines.

Postal police and postal inspectors are held to the exact same training standards, same proficiency standards as far as weapons use, equipment use, defensive tactics, procedural standards. The postal police are held to a higher ethical standard, however, because they are uniformed and are recognizable where the inspectors themselves can't be identified. Therefore, it's less likely that they would pose an embarrassment to the Service. So there is a higher ethical and moral standard held for the postal police.

There is also a disparity in pay in that police officers are paid half that of inspectors and that has created what I believe to be a serious rift in that we are not publicly admitted as part of the Inspection Service. The inspectors consider themselves the secret service and we are their secret.

Mr. SAWYER. Is there mobility, is there a pathway between the two services so that those who excel in one can participate in another? For example, could the postal police move into the Inspection Service? Is there an institutional pathway for that or would they have to make separate application and start all over again? Can a postal inspector who has evidenced sound and responsible command and control capacity move into a broader area of supervisory control within the postal police and back and forth in that way? It's the sort of thing we would do in a public safety—

Mr. CHRISTIE. The postal police have no career advancement whatsoever at all. We can go from officer on the street to a five-cent-an-hour raise as a sergeant, to another nickel to a lieutenant,



in the large cities another dime to a captain. That is the extent of the career advancement for a police officer.

An inspector can, if he wishes, demote into postal police ranks. However, as a management individual rate who gets paid more than any other postal employee, it would not be reasonable for him to do so with the exception of when they're forced to as a disciplinary matter.

Mr. SAWYER. Are the postal police—do they have an integrated command structure or do they respond to the same supervisory structure as other outside employees?

Mr. CHRISTIE. We have our own structure in addition to every one of the 2,200 postal inspectors has the authority to tell any postal police officer at any time what he or she will do, to include moving traffic cones, making coffee, respond or not respond, it doesn't matter. They have that authority to make a direct order upon any level of any postal police officer.

Mr. SAWYER. I'm amazed.

Mr. CHRISTIE. We don't function like a police force.

Mr. SAWYER. Maybe I shouldn't be.

Is there an alternative division of responsibility or integration of responsibility that you believe might be more effective?

Mr. CHRISTIE. I would think a merging of the two organizations would be acceptable. The Postal Inspection Service takes care of their own, of which we are not a group, although we are budgeted under them and we are subordinate to them. I would like to see a situation where we work as a law enforcement force. You start off as a beat cop. You can work your way up with a definite chain of command, with career movement up and down, working together as a group. We're housed in separate buildings. We are with the post office and the inspectors are themselves above the post office and isolated from the post office in their own offices.

Mr. SAWYER. What is the command relationship between postal police, postal inspectors, and proprietary guard services that are brought in to supplement the postal police in situations where—of the kind that you describe, where there isn't a postal police presence?

Mr. CHRISTIE. The private security are brought in to replace postal police. They're not a supplement to the police force. The private security are then no longer budgeted out of Inspection Service funds, but they are paid out of a postmaster's budget. The Inspection Service thereby wishes to empower the postmaster for the responsibility of his protection of his employees, releasing the Inspection Service from that responsibility and thereby removing the postal police from the Inspection Service, which they view as a drag upon their organization.

Mr. SAWYER. Can I pursue this for just a moment more?

Miss COLLINS. Yes.

Mr. SAWYER. I don't want to dominate the questioning, but I'm just amazed at this.

Who are these private services responsible to in terms of command and control?

Mr. CHRISTIE. They would be responsible to a postmaster or postal supervisor, depending on the size of the facility, basically whoever signs their paycheck. It's a contracted item. They have areas

of responsibility. They will stand outside the building. They will have no powers of arrest and if the manager is unhappy with their performance, he doesn't renew their contract.

Mr. SAWYER. Is there a division or differentiation between the responsibilities of the postal police and these services? What are the limits and differences between what they can and cannot do?

Mr. CHRISTIE. Well, a postal police officer is, in fact, a police officer covered under all the statutes that the inspectors are under. A security guard, on the other hand, does not have the powers of arrest. Generally they are unarmed. We have had, for example, Paterson, NJ, the security guards that are there in place of postal police were being mugged, so the local police had to come and guard the security guards.

Mr. SAWYER. The licensure and training responsibilities of people in proprietary services, and I don't mean to denigrate them. I honest to goodness think they perform a valuable service within a society at large and they may well have an appropriate service within the entire panoply of safety forces within the Postal Service. But do they have training standards that are service-wide or are they simply responsible for the level of training and licensure that either state or local governments require and all the disparity from site to site across the country?

Mr. CHRISTIE. It's strictly local. I myself went down to a security guard company that does handle some work for the post office at a time and I applied for a position with them. They gave me a 23-question questionnaire to meet the State requirement. They also gave me the answers for the 23 questions. I filled out the true/false questionnaire, paid them \$25 and was licensed to be a security guard at that time and placed under their employment.

Mr. SAWYER. Let me just ask one final question. One of the tools that we used in local government, in trying to cooperate with other localities around us, was a series of formalized neutral assistance agreements. They're common across the country in law enforcement. If we didn't—my city, as the largest community in the broader area, often took responsibility for highly specialized services like—well, you mentioned bomb units and the relationship that exists with Boston, I think it was in your testimony. We had similar kinds of relationships with hazardous materials. I assume that hazardous materials move through the mails all the time. Special events coordination, the kind of security that goes with the movement of high elected officials through a community.

Are there formal protocols that exist between the postal police and local governments or these on an ad hoc basis? Are there standards by which the postal police make these kinds of arrangements on a law enforcement basis or are these done through the postmasters, the civilian supervisors of the Postal Service? How are those kinds of arrangements structured? I'm interested in the kind of relationship with which I have some experience between uniformed police, the Postal Inspection Service, nonuniform local detective services. The whole range of things that is at the point of intersection between law enforcement, employee behavior, threats within and without the employment structure of the Postal Service and the way in which local communities and postal law enforcement vehicles cooperate in the core sense of that word.

Can you describe mutual assistance and the kind of protocols that exist back and forth?

Mr. CHRISTIE. In some cities, I really don't want to mention which ones because we view this as a positive thing and we don't want to get in trouble.

Mr. SAWYER. Oh, I view it as a positive thing. I'm not criticizing it at all.

Mr. CHRISTIE. But in some cities postal police do have informal mutual aid agreements. They'll go across the street, render assistance to officers. Officers render assistance to us. However, in probably 60 percent of our locations the official position is that we're the Federal Government, the Federal Government subsidizes the cities, therefore the cities will help us. However, because we are becoming a private entity, it is not our responsibility to offer them any assistance in return.

An example would be New York City where two officers arrested someone for stealing a car while they were in the performance of their duty. That arrest required an hour and a half of their time and it was not an arrest that went on the Inspection Service statistics, so they were each suspended for 14 days.

Mr. SAWYER. Could you offer something in writing? Could you provide us a narrative regarding that particular circumstance?

I'm going to stop my questioning right now. But you get the sense of the direction that I'm heading. I suspect that we could do a great deal better in terms of coordinating the work not only within the Postal Service but among the law enforcement entities within communities.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Miss COLLINS. You're welcome.

Mrs. Gonzalez, I too would like to offer my condolences to you and to tell you that the events were just so horrifying that there's not much anyone can say except extreme neglect of the Postal Service to offer the protection to your husband.

Mr. Sawyer, I allowed you so much leniency in your questions because they were all such good and appropriate questions and I thank you for them.

I just have a few questions to ask you before we adjourn. The first question, Mr. Christie, that I was going to ask you is where the inspector in charge of New York ordered that all incident reports be suppressed from all postal police officers. That was in response to the Gonzalez murder. Is that right?

Mr. CHRISTIE. That's correct.

Miss COLLINS. So, to this point, they no longer receive incident reports?

Mr. CHRISTIE. They no longer even write their own reports.

Miss COLLINS. They no longer write incident reports?

Mr. CHRISTIE. They don't write the report, somebody writes them for them and they are not allowed to see it.

Miss COLLINS. Finally, you mentioned at the beginning of your statement that the Congress instituted the postal police officers by legislation.

Mr. Sawyer, I believe it would be appropriate for our committees to ask the Postmaster General to comment on the downsizing of the postal police officers, where he expected to lead, what he expect



their responsibilities and duties to be. I think we should get answers for the record for these hearings. I almost wish we had heard him before we heard the management hearing so that we would have the appropriate questions to ask.

Mr. SAWYER. Madam Chairman, I think the same kinds of things may apply to the participants on the previous panel. Their response to this as a fundamental part of the environment in which their members work I think is an important line of questioning. Indeed, we will have an opportunity next week to pursue the same kinds of questions with the final hearing. I suspect that our previous witnesses and those who are here with us today would be more than willing to respond in writing.

Miss COLLINS. Good.

One final question. Are the qualifications for postal police officers the same as the requirements for postal inspectors?

Mr. CHRISTIE. No. There is a different educational requirement for postal inspectors. They're primarily looking for someone with an accounting degree or possibly someone who speaks a language. They do have 800 people who primarily perform accounting functions. So, they're looking for accountants.

Miss COLLINS. Which is a lot different from security really, when you're going more into the accounting aspect of security rather than the physical safety.

Well, I thank you very much, both Mr. Christie and his guests and the first panel. I thank you very much for your important contribution to this series of hearings.

This hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:42 a.m., the subcommittees were adjourned.]

# JOINT HEARING TO REVIEW VIOLENCE IN THE U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1993

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, SUBCOMMITTEE ON CEN-  
SUS, STATISTICS AND POSTAL PERSONNEL, JOINTLY  
WITH THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON POSTAL OPERATIONS AND  
SERVICES, COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL  
SERVICE,

*Washington, DC.*

The subcommittees met, pursuant to call, at 10:05 a.m., in room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Thomas C. Sawyer (chairman of the Subcommittee on Census, Statistics and Postal Personnel) presiding.

Members present: Representatives Sawyer, Collins, and Petri.

Mr. SAWYER. Good morning. Welcome to our third hearing in this series of joint hearings, with the Subcommittee on Postal Operations and Services, to review the broad range of issues that surround the incidence of violence in the Postal Service.

While she catches her breath and while I catch mine, let me just say thanks to my cochair, Congresswoman Barbara-Rose Collins, whose leadership on this issue has been important to all of us.

Last week we heard from representatives of the Postal Service's employee organizations. They talked about the importance of stress, adequacy of security, grievance and arbitration processes, the importance of preemployment screening, and the appropriate use of discipline.

I think we all agree that it is time for all of us to continue our search for collaborative solutions that are really reflective of the common vulnerability that everyone faces in the workplace, regardless of position—managers, supervisors, employees. Everybody is potentially at risk of becoming a victim. From that shared vulnerability should come a shared sense of responsibility in looking for ways to build trust and to sustain the relationships that can make us all secure.

The Postmaster General outlined several initiatives designed to improve postal operations to affect the culture of the Postal Service itself. He talked about his 360-degree feedback survey, the agency's efforts to improve job applicant screening, and procedures to respond to threats as they are identified.

There really aren't any easy ways to deal with this. The Postal Service appears to be in the forefront of combating a growing phenomenon that is not unique to the Postal Service. Violence in the workplace is, in fact, as a matter of the kinds of measurements

that we have seen, more prevalent in the general workplaces of America than in the Postal Service itself.

Nevertheless, the Postal Service ought to be a manageable environment where there is both the opportunity to make significant progress and where we have much to learn that can be not only applied within the Postal Service but more broadly across the workplaces of America. Those lessons and corrective options really ought to be broadly applied in other workplaces.

I look forward to our work together and look forward to our testimony today.

Madam chair, do you have any opening statement?

Miss COLLINS. Very brief.

I would like to thank my distinguished colleague, the Honorable Thomas Sawyer, for cochairing this important hearing today. This is, of course, the third in a series of joint hearings by the Postal Operations and Services and Census, Statistics and Postal Personnel Subcommittees.

Today, as we continue to hear from members of the organizations who represent postal workers, it is important that we keep the focus of why we are here clear in our minds. There are serious problems that have caused the Postal Service to be viewed as a bureaucracy that has run amok.

Among those problems is the issue of confused managers who perhaps may have been instructed to provide service at any cost, the possible abuse of using overtime and temporary help as a solution to dealing with the removal of experienced workers through the restructuring of the Postal Service, delays in implementing automation plans, and workers who are overworked and stressed mainly due to the uncertainty of employment within the Postal Service.

However, as serious as these concerns are, safety in the workplace must be a priority. Conditions that foster violence must be identified and eliminated. Today, I hope that our invited guests will help us in our effort to address this very serious problem.

As has been stated over and over again in the course of these hearings, every employee and manager deserves a safe workplace environment.

I thank all of you gentlemen for coming today to testify. One day we are going to integrate our witness panel and have women, I hope not too far off. But nevertheless, I thank all of you for taking time out of your very busy work schedules and testify to help us resolve this problem.

Thank you very much. I look forward to hearing your testimony.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much.

Mr. SAWYER. Our first panel will consist of Jim Miller, who is the president of the National Association of Postmasters; Armando Olvera, who is president of the National League of Postmasters; and Vince Palladino, who is president of the National Association of Postal Supervisors.

Gentlemen, welcome. If you would, identify your colleagues at the table with you for the record, and we look forward to your testimony.

Mr. Miller.



STATEMENTS OF JAMES MILLER, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTMASTERS, ACCOMPANIED BY CORA LEE MARTINS; AND KEN VLIETSTRA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NAPUS; ARMANDO OLVERA, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL LEAGUE OF POSTMASTERS, ACCOMPANIED BY ED BOWLEY, LEGISLATIVE CONSULTANT; AND VINCE PALLADINO, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS, ACCOMPANIED BY BOB McLEAN, LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT

Mr. MILLER. With me, madam chairman, is also Cora Lee Martins, sitting back here. She was invited to sit at the table, by the way, and respectfully declined. Also on my right hand is Ken Vlietstra, executive director of NAPUS. You do have my written testimony—

Mr. SAWYER. For a moment I thought you were addressing me as "Madam Chairman." [Laughter.]

Mr. MILLER. Madam Cochair—there is a little levity there.

I do want to add this to my written testimony because several events have taken place since I submitted that, and the first one is taken from the FBI Uniform Crime Report, and this coincides with my written testimony about the actions and the work of the Postal Inspections Service. They have been recently credited with a 37-percent burglary-solution rate, almost three times the national law enforcement average, and, for the record, for robbery solutions, it is almost 56 percent. They have used an operation deterrence in the New York City area and brought about a 50-percent reduction in armed robberies, and that is a type of action they are planning to make more widespread.

Second, I referred in my testimony to the new EAP hotline as a potential or possible improvement over previous policies and procedures. Over the last several days, and after extensive investigation, the best description I can give of that is, I may have been overly optimistic.

I have been working since last Friday with a potentially suicidal postmaster in New Mexico. I discovered some hotline numbers that Dr. John Kurutz, the Postal Service Director of EAP, had not even heard of, and finally was successful in reaching a counselor in Pittsburgh, PA, to talk by phone with the troubled postmaster in New Mexico.

They are investigating further, we are going to investigate further, but as of now this is obviously a situation that needs our investigation, it needs our continued surveillance, so to speak, and we are going to meet personally with the new NAPIS president-elect, David Gains, when he comes in November 1 with Dr. John Kurutz and his staff.

Third, I referred in my testimony about the absence of the APWU from the unified Postal Service directed efforts to reduce threats of violence in the workplace. I was dismayed to read at least some excerpts from Mr. Biller's testimony where his fingers pointed straight at postal management as a root cause. It is far more complex from that.

Mr. Biller quoted statistics from the National Health Institute. Based on his statement dating from 1986, the Postal Service should be commended for reducing internecine homicides from 58 percent down to 13 percent.

The sad fact is, all postal employees, as you said, craft and management, are at risk in a postal installation when a deeply troubled employee goes on the attack. By working together rather than finger pointing, we have made progress. By working together, we can still do more.

I will be happy to answer any questions at the conclusion.  
[The prepared statement of Mr. Miller follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES MILLER, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTMASTERS

Thank you Chairman Thomas C. Sawyer and Chairwoman Barbara-Rose Collins. I cannot say it is a pleasure to talk on the topic of violence in the postal workplace because I wish it were not an issue. Unfortunately, it is an issue. It is an issue not only in the United States Postal Service, but in workplaces all across America, in our schools and the streets on which we walk and drive every day. I appreciate your invitation to hear the views of 22,000 postmasters who are active members of the National Association of Postmasters of the United States (NAPUS).

Since the tragedy of November 13, 1991 in Royal Oak, Michigan, the Postal Service has taken an active role in investigating postal violence and seeking to find preventative remedies. The Postal Service has invited all the labor and management organizations to participate, making the quest for elimination of violence a joint venture.

When the joint meetings stalled, NAPUS expressed our deep concerns, and commitment to solutions by withdrawing our support and participation unless the Joint Committee meetings changed. These views were sent by letter to Joe Mahon, Vice President Labor Relations (See Attachments I, II and III). As a result, a Subcommittee Task Force was established. The Task Force met on a regular basis with Dr. Mark Braverman in the headquarters of the National Association of Postal Supervisors (NAPS) to compile an action plan. We submitted the plan to Postal Service Senior Managers. Since that time, NAPUS has been an active participant in all aspects of this joint venture, and looks forward to continued involvement.

NAPUS is pleased with several changes that have been implemented since Royal Oak. First, the establishment of a 24-hour, toll-free hotline to the Postal Inspection Service in Washington, DC helped to encourage employees to report potential threatening situations. More recently, this has been expanded with another toll-free crisis EAP hotline to deal with non-threatening personal or workplace problems. These hotlines expedite the information available to Postal Inspectors and the National Intervention teams and allow for earlier recognition of potential problems.

Second, the conversion from the EAP counselor position to a more highly educated professional will be watched carefully. These EAP coordinators lack the Postal Service background and experience of their predecessors. What NAPUS hopes they will provide is the opportunity for ready access to counseling; professional and confidential assistance to resolve personal and workplace conflicts; and to permit troubled employees to seek such help before resorting to violent behavior.

Third, the recent contracting of pre-employment screening to a professional company should help us identify potential troubled individuals. With this enhanced screening of potential employees, the Postal Service can avoid hiring some individuals who are a high risk of becoming threats to others.

Fourth, our national committee on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace has approved an intervention plan where we can work together, labor and management, and seek to help troubled worksites. Our frustration is that it has taken over a year and a half to come up with this intervention plan. Along the way, we noticed hesitation on the part of the Senior Managers of the Postal Service to adopt this plan. Only after the recent violence in Dearborn, Michigan and Dana Point, California did that resistance fade.

I believe that we will not have done all we can do to prevent further acts of violence until we have created fully trained intervention teams in each of the 85 Districts. A few Districts, such as Denver and Minneapolis, have developed their own prevention or intervention teams, specifically trained to address violence prevention and improvement in workplace relationships. These teams, working in conjunction with expertise provided by the EAP Coordinators, could help identify and resolve problems before they escalate into violence. I further believe these teams are necessary if we are to do everything possible to prevent more acts of violence.

In reviewing the multiple acts of violence that have occurred in the Postal Service during the past decade, perpetrators have almost always been identified as troubled

employees prior to the act of violence. The problem has not been identification of troubled employees, but rather, dealing effectively with the individuals who have been the problem.

Violence prevention teams, at the local level, are another resource that could help with this identification and provide another method for resolution. One of the barriers we have faced while working as a national committee has been the unwillingness of one of the major organizations, the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), to participate on this national joint venture. Their refusal to work through national joint or team approach hampers our overall effectiveness. This sends a mixed signal, because the APWU should be commended for the leadership and assistance they provide in implementing the Postal Employees Relief Fund.

We have listed some of the problems and solutions. Since your last hearings, additional concerns have been brought to our attention. The assault of postal workers on each other is still a major concern. Those pale in comparison with the assaults and violence perpetrated on postal employees by those outside the Postal Service.

NAPUS is deeply concerned about armed robberies of our city and rural letter carriers. These carriers are alone on the streets and roadways and have been targeted as profitable robbery victims. We are concerned about armed robberies of our window clerks in larger cities and the robberies and murders of postmasters in smaller post offices. Burglaries were once the accepted method of robbing a post office, but that has changed to a far more deadly and premeditated "modus operandi". We appreciate the able cooperation, advice and assistance of the Postal Inspection Service, especially in this area.

While the level of stress in the workplace has improved in some locations, our members know that there will soon be a return to national policy unrealistic budget pressures, leading to threats and increased levels of stress to postmasters, supervisors and craft employees. The shortage of employees is a high stress factor in many offices. Employees are required to work excessive hours of overtime, and opportunities for time off are more restrictive and difficult. This staffing shortage has gone on too long and is needlessly adding stress and costs that can be avoided.

Many postmasters who are exempt from FLSA requirements are working excessive hours, trying to meet both administrative and operational demands in office with less than sufficient staffing. Some have scheduled themselves for duty as city letter carriers on a regular basis. What alternatives will these postmasters have, when demands for further budget cuts come down from Postal Service Headquarters?

I would encourage members of these subcommittees to support upcoming legislation that will improve federal anti-stalking laws. Improved legislation in this area may have helped prevent the violent incident at the Dana Point, California. It may be time to look at all our federal laws designed to protect federal employees in the course of their normal duties. As noted, postal employees, including postmasters, are increasingly facing greater threats of violence from outside forces, often the innocent victims of robbery attempts. Do we need to strengthen some of these laws for the added protection of federal and postal employees?

Thank you for allowing me to share the perspectives of postmasters on this serious topic, and I appreciate your support in continuing to work with the United States Postal Service while we all seek to prevent and avoid further acts of violence in our workplaces.

I will be happy to answer any questions.





JAMES F. MILLER  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

September 28, 1992

Joseph J Mahon Jr  
Vice President Labor Relations  
United States Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington DC 20260-4000

Dear Joe:

SUBJECT: Consideration of Withdrawal by NAPUS from  
Participation In and Attendance at National  
Committee Meetings for Prevention of Violence in  
the Workplace.

As President of the National Association of Postmasters of the United States, I face serious decisions. NAPUS surveyed our postmasters for their deepest concerns in 1990. The results of those surveys, shared with PMG Tony Frank, DPMG Mike Coughlin and other senior managers, indicated as serious problems: lack of complement, staff and budget, resulting in postmasters working 10-12 hours a day, 6-7 days a week, taking administrative work home to get it done, and creating unwarranted stress. CURRENT policies have compounded these problems and escalated them to dangerous proportions. The potential for violence has escalated accordingly and now includes postmasters. As a result of this stress, the violence would include as dangers for postmasters---heart attacks, strokes, suicide and even murder. From our standpoint, this is unnecessary, it can and should be prevented. I will share my concerns.

1) Postmasters have been presented with impossible budgets for 1993. 2) They do not have enough craft employees to do the job 3) Elimination of supervisors without any input from NAPUS with no reduction in accountability or responsibility for managing their post office, thereby placing the postmaster under additional stress and 4) A proposed 40% decrease in postal inspectors and their assistance to postmasters in post offices thereby making a bad situation only worse.



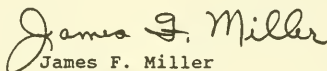
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTMASTERS OF THE UNITED STATES  
8 HERBERT STREET, ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22305-2600  
(703) 683-9127

ATTACHMENT I  
Continued

Mr Joseph J Mahon Jr  
September 28, 1992  
Page Two

If you can clear your schedule, I'm available this week any day except September 30th as we will be involved in the full house committee meeting with Postmaster General Runyon. At any meeting that we might schedule, I would appreciate the invitation extended to Dr. Mark Braverman. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
James F. Miller



UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
475 L'ENFANT PLAZA SW  
WASHINGTON DC 20260

ATTACHMENT II  
RECEIVED OCT 21 1992

October 16, 1992

Mr. James F. Miller  
President  
National Association of Postmasters  
of the United States  
8 Herbert Street  
Alexandria, VA 22305-2600

Dear Jim:

In response to your letter of September 28, we are particularly sensitive to the concerns addressed in your letter regarding increased levels of stress in our work-place. I don't believe that your withdrawal from the National Committee on Violence and Behavior will contribute anything constructive to our joint consideration of this issue. To the contrary, I think your continued active involvement in this effort will serve to surface, as it has in the past, the types of issues that our postmasters are particularly sensitive to.

The efforts currently underway with Dr. Mark Braverman, of which you are a part, will only be productive if we continue to operate as a cohesive group. I am certain that you would agree that withdrawal by any of the Committee members would only serve to undermine the effectiveness of these efforts. To this end, I would encourage you to work with us and your colleague labor and management organization representatives to find constructive means of addressing the difficult issues raised in your recent letter and currently under consideration by the work group.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joe Mahon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joe" and last name "Mahon" clearly visible.

Joseph J. Mahon, Jr.  
Vice President  
Labor Relations





# THREATS

## WHAT RIGHTS DO POSTMASTERS HAVE?

By Jennifer Worick  
Assistant Editor

*(Editor's Note: Names and references to gender have been omitted to protect the identities of the parties involved.)*

In late January 1991, a Step 2 grievance meeting took place in a Level 20 post office. Present were division labor relations management personnel as well as a union steward who had initiated two grievances against the office's postmaster.

The grievances (in which the steward was also the involved employee) maintained that the postmaster had been telling this employee to be more efficient and maintain a reasonable walking pace while on the route. Because of this, the employee also alleged harassment by the postmaster.

At the meeting, the steward was asked what could be done to resolve the dispute. The steward replied, "Put a bullet through that f-----'s head." After making the comment, the steward was asked if this was a threat and the response was "no." But the employee went on to say, with a laugh, that the labor relations representative attending the meeting should be the one to shoot the postmaster.

This same labor relations representative immediately contacted the postmaster at whom the comment was directed. The postmaster, in turn, contacted the director of field operations regarding the incident.

"Whether [the comment] was made directly to me or not should not be the issue; that it was made at all shows the character of [the individual] who made it, and that should be of major concern to the Postal Service, the postmaster wrote in early February.

"...There have been too many

incidents of violence by employees toward management in the last few years; I do not want to be in that category. We as managers have rights also...If I have to worry that every time I make a management decision, direct [this employee] in job performance, that [the employee] may blow up, then I will have lost my effectiveness as a manager. That should not be."

The Inspection Service was contacted and two inspectors took sworn statements from all who attended the meeting where the comment was made. All statements verified the accuracy of the comment.

The postmaster continued to pursue avenues of recourse, repeatedly asking for removal of the carrier/steward from the office. After several dead-ends, the postmaster was finally given authorization to remove the employee, nearly a month after the comment was made. The division labor relations office assisted in writing the removal notice which notified the employee that removal from the Postal Service would occur in early April.

The postmaster also requested that if removal would not be sustained, that at least the employee be reassigned to another office.

As a union steward, the employee immediately filed a Step 2 grievance appeal. This appeal was addressed at the division and, less than two weeks after the removal notice, the employee

was returned to work with full back-pay. "Further inappropriate and unacceptable conduct," the employee was warned, "could result in termination."

Needless to say, the postmaster was deeply distressed by the decision. The PM wrote a letter to the director of field operations, reporting on the employee's "minimum accepted" performance upon returning to the office, and the other employees' dissatisfaction with the ruling. The employees had all signed their names to a letter outlining their feelings against the grievant, joining their postmaster in going out on a limb.

Documents were made available to a NAPUS PM rep and our organization stepped in to assist the postmaster. All possible attempts were made to resolve the situation at the division level, with no results. Executive Director Ken Vlietstra reviewed the case and found this lack of response by the division unacceptable.

"The settlement was, in clear terms, a slap on the face to the postmaster. Not only is the employee brought back to the same office, but [the employee] also received full back pay for all time off," Vlietstra said in a letter to the postmaster's director of field operations. He added that such a decision could lead some to believe that threatening a postmaster could actually pay off for an employee.

The director of field operations replied that the statement was determined to be a stupid remark, rather than a threat.

Vlietstra then contacted the region regarding the incident, again seeking a willingness to find a remedy at the local level. When the regional office called NAPUS to say it "didn't want to touch this one" (paraphrased), Vlietstra went to

*(Continued on page 25)*

**THREATS***(Continued from page 17)*

Headquarters with the growing file. David Cybulski, special assistant to the SAPMG, Human Resources, contacted the regional director in an attempt to clear up any misconceptions or negative impressions regarding the incident.

The regional director drafted a letter to

Vlietstra, stating the difficulty in differentiating a threat from a joke. The fact that the remark was not made directly to the postmaster strengthened the final decision. The regional director clearly outlined MSPB factors that supported the decision not to go forward with the removal.

NAPUS exhausted its options and the situation seemed destined to remain unresolved and unsatisfactory for the postmaster. The postmaster was the victim of the threat, yet was asked to suffer the consequences as well.

As it turned out, it was the postmaster who had to leave the office rather than the steward, who uttered the "stupid remark." Seven months after the threat was made, the postmaster applied for and was reassigned to a new office.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much for your testimony.

Let me mention that the entire text of our written statement will be made a part of the record, without objection, and the same will apply to each of our subsequent witnesses.

Mr. Olvera.

Mr. OLVERA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My name is Armando Olvera, president of the National League of Postmasters, and I am accompanied by Ed Bowley, the league's legislative consultant.

I am proud to represent the Nation's postmasters, and I welcome this occasion to offer input to these two distinguished committees as you review concerns in dealing with the problems and causes of workplace behavior.

I have submitted my written testimony, but at this time I would like to just summarize a couple of points that I deem necessary.

The House Post Office Committee, in its investigation into the Royal Oak incident, discovered that there was some criticism aimed at the Postal Inspection Service, and I can personally say, sort of backing what Jim Miller has said, that the response that we get from the Inspection Service is totally different now from what we used to receive two years ago.

We used to get a copy of the investigative memorandum what had gone on in the past, and when we suggested that there were still some further problems that had not been uncovered, they were sort of passed over. Now they are looked at again; another inspector is sent in to look at the situation. So I applaud this increase in the activity of the Postal Inspection Service.

The preemployment screening which is something that has been needed for some time, and I think not to just put the entire blame on the employee, because definitely there is blame to go around to everybody when these tragedies occur.

But like you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, in your opening remarks, this is not unique to the Postal Service. In fact, in the Washington Post this morning there is a story of Fort Knox, KY, where an employee killed three fellow employees, and this was done because the employee did not receive a promotion.

So we have very similar concerns, especially in the postmaster ranks, when an employee does not get a promotion or an employee is disciplined. We are considering quickening the discipline procedure so that it does not go on forever. This is very stressful, very much on the employee obviously, but also on management.

This is something where I feel we are going in the right direction. It has been long overdue that we overhaul our entire disciplinary procedure. These two were very high on the committee's recommendations, and I feel the Postal Service has addressed them quite adequately, but obviously the answer is still not complete.

We have similar cases happening throughout the country. Indeed, right here in the District of Columbia we have very much of a problem with violence, but this is something that has to be addressed, and I applaud the Postal Service for continuing to have these monthly meetings. Occasionally we do not meet on a monthly basis, but by and large we still get together and talk, and this type of committee meeting is cascading down to the area and post office level, and some districts like Denver, CO, have started a very good



intervention process where management and employee organizations sit together and talk over the problems that might occur in a troubled facility, and if deemed necessary, a combined effort is made to look into the problem and investigate it further. This is starting to cascade into other districts. I think we will see a difference.

Obviously, our national committee from Washington cannot dictate what goes on in Miami, FL. We have to depend on the field to assemble similar committees and do the work at that level, because at that level is where the answers can be found and problems corrected.

I applaud this committee for taking the interest in pursuing this. This is something that we can not voice just once. I think the attention needs to be constant on this effort, and I applaud this committee for taking the initiative in this effort.

I am available for any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Olvera follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ARMANDO OLVERA, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL LEAGUE OF POSTMASTERS

Mr. Chairman, my name is Armando Olvera, president of the National League of Postmasters and I am accompanied by Ed Bowley, the league's legislative consultant.

I am proud to represent the Nation's postmasters, and I welcome this occasion to offer input to these two distinguished committees as you review concerns in dealing with the problems and causes of workplace behavior.

The U.S. Postal Service has come a long way since that tragic event took place on November 14, 1991 at the Royal Oak, MI, postal facility.

We, along with other employee and management organizations, have had regularly scheduled meetings as a working-group with top postal management seeking ways to prevent the recurrence of such tragedies.

I am of the opinion that our many indepth sessions have provided us with a greater understanding of the problem and that our actions to date has led toward a safer, more harmonious, as well as a more productive workplace.

The more recent incidents at Dana Point, CA, and Dearborn, MI, clearly demonstrate that a complete solution to the problem of violence is illusive, not only for the Postal Service, but throughout our society.

I would like to take this opportunity to share with this committee the actions taken by the Postal Services working-group since the Royal Oak incident in 1991.

As you know, the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee staff conducted a lengthy investigation of the Royal Oak incident and proposed a number of recommendations directed to all concerned parties.

We commend their action and used their report as the basis for the postal working-group's initiatives.

Our working-group has taken action in several of the areas that the committee recommended, and in some instances we exceeded their recommendations.

For example, we have, with rare exception, met monthly since December 1991 to discuss some of the causes of workplace violence as well as the things that may contribute to it. Often the root of those causes began in early life.

One recommendation of the committee called for preemployment review. In this area the Postal Service has devised a preemployment screening—authorization and release form. This form is in keeping with the requirements outlined in the privacy act and is voluntary. If, however, the applicant refuses consent for the Postal Service to inquire about their character and employment history in an effort to determine fitness for employment it could have an adverse affect on their employment opportunities.

The committee report was critical of the postal inspection force and the Postal Service has made numerous changes including, but not limited to: extending postal inspector's training to include information and material from behavioral scientists; establishing a 24 hour hotline; entering all threats into a permanent data base; re-emphasizing the protection of employees and prevention of violence in training postal inspectors.

Also, the amount of time the Postal Inspection Service devotes to threats and assaults has been doubled.

Our working-group established a national task force on workplace violence, which involves postal management and the field leadership of labor and management associations. This task force is developing a plan for assessing the work environment and intervening in specific locations where stress or tension is high.

The task force has drafted a national policy consistent with the two joint statements on workplace violence and stress prevention issued by our working-group. Their policy is based on a model of local teams operating under the guidance of the national committee. The objectives and components of the policy include: early detection and intervention; flexible response; alternatives to grievance—arbitration procedures; coordinated response; training and support; and ongoing oversight, support and evaluation.

In addition, the Postal Service is conducting focus groups, on the clock, throughout the country, to give employees and their representatives the opportunity to discuss the following: recent shootings; their local working climate; their concerns about security; and their ideas and suggestions for preventing future violence.

These focus groups' sessions are attended by a professional counselor.

Postmaster General Marvin Runyon has taken steps to change the culture in the workplace. He has stressed the need to improve communication, commitment, and cooperation among managers, supervisors, employees, and the leadership of the employee organizations.

Early this year a program and training were initiated in Denver, Colorado and other sites, designed to prevent violence in the workplace. The local committee identified the following three critical elements which form the foundation of the violence in the workplace program:

1. A commitment of support for this program from all management and craft groups.
2. Establishment of a comprehensive, on-going educational program for all employees.
3. Creation of a prevention/intervention program to assist people in the field to deal with potentially threatening situations on the workroom floor.

Mr. Chairman, numerous other things have occurred since that fateful event in Royal Oak.

At that time, we concede that labor/management relations were poor throughout the Postal Service, but particularly at the Royal Oak facility. We believe a great deal of improvement in those relations has occurred since then, mostly due to the changes brought about by the recent postal reorganizational structure.

It is worth noting that there was no evidence of poor postal management in the recent Dana point and Dearborn facilities.

The new postal service management structure has reduced bureaucratic policies and has improved communications between the levels of management.

The working-group continues to seek improvements in speeding up disciplinary decisions. Delays cause friction and frustrations which cause stress.

Royal Oak can never be forgotten, nor should it be. It is a constant reminder of what can happen when we forget the "do unto others" rule. We are diligently working with top postal management and others throughout the postal system for a greater mutual respect. Every employee needs to be treated courteously and with dignity.

We concede, Mr. Chairman, that Postal Service work can at times be stressful. However, for some, stress can be caused by a minor job irritant. Often the entire body can be affected. In many cases, work induced stress can be overwhelmingly—a chronic, powerful anxiety that triggers anger, physical illness, substance abuse or depression.

The Postal Service, However, does not control that market in this matter. We have found no evidence to indicate which occupations are the most stressful. Everyone seems to have periods of work-related stress.

Mr. Chairman, we all regret these postal tragedies, and we recommend these committee efforts in seeking preventive methods to reduce the probability of other such tragedies. I believe the Postal Service is moving in a direction to assist that effort.

The new postal management structure is designed to provide quicker and more direct decisions. Hopefully, it will provide more consistent policies and the opportunity for everyone to be a part of the team.

To eliminate stress is not possible—to care and to listen is possible—and is essential in creating a more stress-free environment. Labor and management working together can accomplish a workroom climate of team work.

Mr. Chairman, the National League of Postmasters will continue work diligently with top postal management, these committees and other organization representatives to find acceptable solutions to these problems.

I would be pleased to answer any questions.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much for your thoughtful testimony, and your entire statement will be part of the record.

Mr. Palladino.

Mr. PALLADINO. Yes, my name is Vince Palladino, president of the National Association of Postal Supervisors. With me today is my legislative assistant, Bob McLean.

You have my text, as you said for the record, and I would just like to summarize very quickly what I think has to be done and what I think we have started but it has not reached ground level yet.

I think the key is the communication at the local level. We cannot get anything done without cooperation with the craft employees. Right now—and I think we will—there are a couple of issues that we have to straighten out. Right now it appears almost like the peace talks at Panmunjon, Korea. We are arguing about what we should call the meeting.

But I think that we have to get together and to meet at that local level. We have to drop our authoritarian culture, and we have to help people, help the employees that have problems. We have to gain the trust of the craft employees.

We talk about discipline. I think we have to move away from discipline when people have a problem and move toward helping them, and I think if we use that type of, I guess, attitude on the working level, we will get the trust and cooperation of the craft employees. The organizations working together can make the working floor a safer place. We are not going to eliminate violence, but we certainly can reduce the probability of it. Nobody can guarantee the reduction of violence, but we can reduce the probability by working together.

The message hasn't reached the bottom yet on our change of culture. We still have a few managers, I guess, that might be authoritarian, and we still have a few shop stewards that want to be adversarial. But I think in time, meeting together, we can solve this problem. I think that is the whole secret.

That is my statement, and I will answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Palladino follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF VINCE PALLADINO, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

Good morning. My name is Vince Palladino, and I am president of National Association of Postal Supervisors. I am pleased to testify before you today on behalf of over 35,000 active and over 2,400 retired postal supervisors. We appreciate your continuing oversight into the problem of violence in the postal work place, an issue of great concern to this management association.

At previous hearings on this issue there has been a sense of shared frustration among the committee members, the employee organizations and the Postal Service. We have all agreed that there is a serious problem, we have all expressed the need to take action, but in the end, we have left these hearings knowing there was so much yet to be done. I am happy to say that while we still have work to do, we have established a framework for a process that can reduce violence in the work place.

The committee members are, I believe, already familiar with the violence intervention process paper circulated among members of the joint Postal Service and employee organization committee addressing the problems of violence and stress in the



work place. To review briefly, the paper outlines how the national committee will intervene when there is a report of a trouble spot where the potential for violence is believed to be very high, and where local managers and employee organization officers have been unable to deal with the situation. Research has shown that in most cases violence does not occur when someone suddenly "snaps." Violence usually occurs when anger and stress are allowed to build up, when complaints go unanswered, and when frustration builds to dangerous levels. Our intervention process is designed to get involved in problem areas before anger, stress and frustration go unaddressed and lead to a violent encounter. And because none of us on the committee are experts in dealing with such situations, an outside expert will be part of the intervention team, to assist and work with those of us with experience in the postal environment.

The intervention process will succeed only if there is adequate communication and a sense of trust among the employee organizations and the Postal Service, and in many installations there is very little communication and absolutely no trust. To improve our communication at the national level, we have both the violence prevention committee, and since last year, the weekly Leadership Team meetings in Washington, which include all Postal Service vice presidents and all employee organization presidents willing to attend.

More importantly, though, we are now starting to see local leadership teams established. At each postal area, district, plant and post office we expect regular meetings to be held among the local presidents of the postal unions and postal management associations, and the local plant manager or postmaster. These individuals will meet to discuss problems, concerns and ideas, including situations where the potential for violence exists.

After many of the shooting incidents that have occurred in recent years, both inside and outside the Postal Service, coworkers of the individuals responsible for injuring or murdering fellow employees or managers are often quoted as saying that "they knew the troubled employee was going to do something like this." Yet in almost all cases such information was not shared with others, or if it was, no action was taken. If we all, employees, supervisors and postmasters, know that someone is a "loose cannon," why can't we do something about that individual?

The answer is that, first, there have been no opportunities for regular meetings among employee organizations and local managers. The leadership teams will provide opportunities for discussing these problems. But too often in the past the reason why nothing has been done was a complete lack of trust. We shouldn't be surprised at this; what else could we expect when people who work together, who depend on each other, never sit down to discuss any issues, serious or frivolous.

We must change our approach and drop our authoritarian ways. But in turn, the craft employee organizations must help, not hinder, the process of identifying employees who need special assistance, whether through the Postal Service's Employee Assistance Program or through some outside group. Craft employees are always privy to information that never reaches supervisors. When human lives are involved, we as supervisors have to earn the trust of craft employees so that people who need help get help. We're not talking about identifying people for the purposes of issuing suspensions or other forms of discipline. We're talking about avoiding a tragic incident that could include the loss of life.

So now we have the opportunity for communication, the vehicle for outside intervention when local leaders are unable to resolve their problems. A structure for dealing with all problems, including violence, is in place. Are we done? Unfortunately, no, and this is where I hope the committee members will be of assistance to postal supervisors and the employees they manage. Leadership teams have been established in many facilities, but not in all facilities. Some local managers have moved quickly to meet with their employee organization counterparts, while others have done so reluctantly, meeting infrequently, and some do not meet with employee organization representatives at all. This is because Postal Service Headquarters has not made local leadership teams mandatory in all functional areas, especially delivery and processing. While we understand that Postmaster General Marvin Runyon wants to "empower" local managers, this is one issue that cannot be optional. Meeting with the elected representative from NAPS or with any other employee organization must be mandatory.

While many authoritarian managers took advantage of last year's early out, not all of them did, and these individuals are the ones who are dragging their feet by not addressing our problems jointly. Because of the way in which we select postmasters general, there are always going to be managers in the field who believe they can out last whoever is in charge, knowing that a new postmaster general will mean a new management style. The facilities these individuals manage are where the committee will continue receiving complaints from craft employees and super-

visors about heavy-handed managers, worker harassment, and possibly violence in the work place. I believe in time we will get them all to the table, but it will take time.

For our part we have named NAPS representatives at the area and district levels. We have encouraged our branch presidents to push for the establishment of local leadership teams. We have asked the Postal Service to make local teams mandatory. With the committee's support, perhaps they will become mandatory.

Many hours have been put into violence prevention, but it would be foolish to think that we can completely eradicate violence from the postal work place. While the postal community seeks to change, the outside world may not, and violence inevitably will invade the postal work place. If that happens again, I personally want to know that the National Association of Postal Supervisors has done everything possible to avoid it by improving communication, anticipating problems and addressing issues that concern employees and managers.

Thank you again for your interest in this issue. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. SAWYER. Gentlemen, thank you all very much.

Let me ask you: You, several of you, both in your written and presented testimony this morning, mentioned the development of local leadership models. You mentioned Denver, and another mentioned Minneapolis. What are the kinds of lessons that we are learning that are working their way into those local models? Are there lessons that we can institutionalize and structurally move across to other settings, or does each setting have to come to its own sense of collaboration? Can any of you talk about that?

Mr. OLVERA. One of the major components of this is the communication, just getting together and talking about the problems, instead of management on one side talking about their perceived problem and labor on the other side talking about their perceived problem. When they get together and talk about the problems, they seem to be not as real, not as bad as each other thought, and also they find simple ways to fix some of the problems.

Yes, there will be other problems that will be pointed out, I think, by the 360 survey that will be going on with managers, but just the communication of getting everybody together—clerks, carriers, mail handlers, rural carriers supervisors, postmasters, together—and talking about the problems, that in itself has been sort of the magic in these committees.

Mr. SAWYER. Mr. Palladino?

Mr. PALLADINO. Yes, in response to that, after our violence in the workplace team first got together, we had written in our organizational magazine and newspapers for the local branches of the organization to emulate that, to get together and find a way to discuss trying how to make the workroom less violent, a nice place to work, and Branch 65 of our organization in Denver started that up, and they made a report to the violence committee.

The report that they gave showed that they had made a lot of progress and helped out a lot of people where things were beginning to rise up. But they also reported that there were areas where they couldn't solve and they would have to step back, and I think the violence committee last month came up with outside help, contract people, that we would make a national threat assessment team that would go in—they would be trained, there would be representatives from all the organizations, and they and they would go in if the problem could not be solved at the local level.

I think that is another step in the right direction because sometimes, don't forget, that Denver team, they don't really have the—

they never received any type of training, they sort of went on their own, they winged it. I think they did a great job, but they also know their inadequacies, and I think the national team that we are trying to form now will help them.

Mr. SAWYER. Sometimes I think recognizing inadequacies is as important as knowing your own strength.

Mr. Miller?

Mr. MILLER. The only other item I would add to what my colleagues have stated: The Denver team said this is not a script for every office to follow, this is not a get well or a success plan that—every office and every employee is individual and therefore must be treated that way. There were some concepts that could be applied to any location, and we are looking at those. Right as of now, there is not a script we can follow and say this is a cure-all.

Mr. SAWYER. Without going into great detail, can you enumerate those elements that do appear to be broadly applicable?

Mr. MILLER. The craft employees now have an avenue to sit down side by side, not across the table, and discuss openly the problems that confront employees in their craft. The other element that has been used successfully is if you have—we will say, for example, a postmaster and a craft employee have a problem. A postmaster can talk to the craft employee, and then the craft employee representative can talk to the postmaster rather than side by side, "I'm going to stick up for my person," et cetera, that type of concept, and they can, as has been stated, bring the problem to resolution sometimes diminish—cut to the quick, in other words, to find what is going on.

But the key is very simply, you have craft employees and managers working side by side for a single-minded goal, the safety of all the employees.

Mr. SAWYER. Let me ask each of you just one other question. We have heard a lot of discussion about trying to streamline grievance and arbitration procedures so that problems don't fester and linger on. Doing that without diminishing employee rights is important.

But the alternative to that we haven't heard quite as much about is the effectiveness of employee assistance programs in addressing the same kinds of difficulties. Could you comment on that?

Mr. Palladino?

Mr. PALLADINO. I have that in my text. I believe that that is the key. Instead of moved towards discipline, we have to work together with the craft representatives to help the person that is having a difficult time.

Many times it could be—it could be any problem that the individual would have; it could be a family problem, it could be a money problem. Whatever it is, we have to train our supervisors and managers to be responsive to that and, instead of looking to discipline, to help.

On the other side of the fence, we have to get the trust of the employee organizations to go to the supervisor. The supervisor may not see it, but the craft employees will. They will see a difference in their coworker. They have to trust us enough to come to us and tell us about the problem, and we should not react with discipline but with assistance. I think that the paramount.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you.



Mr. Olvera?

Mr. OLVERA. Our organization several years ago, started its own EAP program. We called it the Impaired Managers Program, because we felt there was a need for this type of assistance, and, funded through the organization, not through the Postal Service, we have helped many employees, because there are a lot of addictions out there, and it is not necessarily just all drug- or alcohol-related.

This program has grown from its infancy, and we helped many managers that felt the EAP program was a craft employee program, it was not a management-employee program.

So maybe if we start moving toward this direction, this would also help because we have managers with a lot of problems, just as employees do.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much.

Ms. Collins?

Miss COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Miller, what does the intervention plan entail?

Mr. MILLER. When a problem is brought to the attention of the team, regardless whether it is a local team, or it is a Denver or Minneapolis or at the national level—

Miss COLLINS. Tell me what a team is.

Mr. MILLER. OK. The team is comprised of the various crafts and management organizations with Postal Service leadership, depending on the location. In Denver, that leadership would be whoever is the chairman of that from the management group. Then they focus on whatever that problem is, and if it is a situation that can be solved locally, then they will take care of it.

If it cannot be—and, as we said, they recognize their limitations—if it is something that requires professional assistance at that point in time, they seek professional assistance.

Miss COLLINS. You said that the Postal Service originally expressed reservation in adopting the plan. Do you know why?

Mr. MILLER. Is this compared to what we had prior with the—with the EAP counselors who are usually postal employees, there were some benefits and there were some problems with that. The benefit was that the counselor was well acquainted with operational problems of the U.S. Postal Service, which sometimes are unique to outside people.

The problem was one of confidentiality, sometimes was the problem, and sometimes these counselors were not professionally trained to handle the deeply troubled employee.

Miss COLLINS. You expressed concerns about armed robberies of postal workers. Do you feel that the current postal police presence is inadequate?

Mr. MILLER. That one is a situation that is going to have to be evaluated by somebody that is a better economist than I am. You cannot provide one-for-one armed guards to go with every postal employee; that is not financially feasible. There has to be a middle ground somewhere.

Miss COLLINS. I think Mr. Olvera mentioned the lack of security—did you not, in your testimony also? Or was it Mr. Palladino?

Last week, we had testimony from the postal police, and they feel very mistreated. They feel that their numbers are being decimated,

that they are not really recognized as the security force of the Postal Service. And they had a very emotional testimony. They brought a widow of a postal employee who was murdered in the Bronx, I believe, and he had asked for police protection two or three times because he was being followed and finally—

Mr. PALLADINO. The driver of an NVS.

Miss COLLINS. Yes, who carried an awful lot of money. He was turned down for that police protection. We had testimony that some of the post offices have upwards of half a million dollars on the premises and that there is no security, and one of the witnesses here mentioned that the *modus operandi* has changed. I mean now there are robberies with semiautomatic weapons, and that the post offices are cased.

In one instance, the robbers walked up to the window and knew the branch manager's name—you know, called him out by name to rob him.

I guess that is something that is going to have to be dealt with.

Mr. MILLER. That was part of my testimony, and that is pointing out that we are a very easy and a profitable target.

Miss COLLINS. Certainly.

Mr. MILLER. The system safeguards must be established. That is one of the reasons that I included that testimony.

But this is not violence within the workplace, these are external threats to postal employees, and it is a far greater threat than the internal.

Miss COLLINS. Well, that is true, absolutely, but when you have postal employees who are asking for protection and they don't get it, we are splitting hairs.

Mr. PALLADINO. We certainly agree. I mean our supervisors and postmasters are in the same building as the craft employees.

What you mentioned was a robbery on Staten Island where they came in the back door and asked for the night supervisor. It happened to be a female at the time. They knew her name, and they brought her to the safe. They knew she had the combination. They said, "Open it up," and they made off. Of course, they weren't very successful. I mean 2 weeks later we had them caught. There was an internal deal. But it was very scary to the employees and the supervisor.

We certainly would like to see the best or whatever we can afford or whatever—whatever we should have for protection, but we don't have control over that. That would be—

Miss COLLINS. Upstairs?

Mr. PALLADINO. Upstairs, I believe.

We would be asking the same way. In fact, our organization represents not the postal police but the sergeants and the lieutenants.

Miss COLLINS. Is that the inspectors?

Mr. PALLADINO. No, not the inspectors. In between.

Miss COLLINS. In between, OK.

Mr. Olvera, you mentioned to eliminate stress is not possible; to care and to listen is possible and is essential in creating a more stress-free environment.

I would like to mention to the witnesses that many, many, many, years ago, almost 30 years ago, I worked in the post office in Detroit. It was a very stressful, plantation-type mentality, and there

was one man, Mr. George Young—in fact, I have introduced a bill to name the post office after him in Detroit—who was the assistant postmaster general, who removed so much stress in that post office, where he would make his tours around the facility, because he would stop and listen to any employee who would have anything to say to him, and he really, I think, cut off a lot of animosity. He didn't always give the employees what they wanted, but he did listen, did seem to care, and many times he did, because, as I recall, some employees couldn't get off for major illnesses—I mean just sick—at the station or for a funeral. But if Mr. Young came through, you knew there was—it was like he was a safety valve for the tensions.

I think this paragraph in your statement is very important. It goes on to say, "Labor and management, working together, can accomplish a workroom climate of teamwork," and I think it is very important.

I think you should understand, as everyone else—all the other witnesses—that the purpose of these hearings is not to assess blame but to look for a solution, to force the coming together of the management and the employee organizations to work for a solution.

Mr. Palladino, you were saying that it was very important when they see a loose cannon, that they report that, but the fact of the matter is, most employees would not report a colleague who they know is a loose cannon, because they feel that that person would lose their job, and people are afraid to make someone—or hesitant to make someone lose their livelihood.

I know that what you said was what you hope is that they wouldn't lose their job but that they would be helped.

Mr. PALLADINO. Right.

Miss COLLINS. So that trust has to be built first.

Mr. PALLADINO. Absolutely. It doesn't come overnight.

Miss COLLINS. Yes, and I try to tell people, you know, trust isn't something that you ask for, trust is something that is earned, and once you have earned the trust, you don't have to ask them to trust you. Is that not right?

Mr. PALLADINO. Absolutely.

Miss COLLINS. I have got lots and lots of questions, but I am going to give them to you in writing so that I can get well thought out answers to the questions.

I feel good about this hearing, because what I see in you witnesses is that you are concerned that you do want a solution. So I'll give you my questions and ask you to respond within a couple of weeks, if you will, and I think we will see some progress.

One further thing. You mentioned the outside counselors coming in. You should know that the employee organizations don't seem to like that outside counseling. They like in-house counseling. They like people whom they know and trust to counsel them, who know the conditions, people who know what is going on in the post office. It seems to me that that has to be worked out also. Maybe you could have both in the counseling.

I can understand why you would want outside professional counselors, because they usually know what they are doing when they are counseling. So perhaps that could be worked out so you could



have joint counseling; I don't know. I don't know if that could be worked out.

I know that you have an awful lot of talent in the post office. You have postal employees who, if not with law degrees, have training, legal training, medical training. It is amazing, the skills that postal workers possess, and perhaps it would be benefit the Service to search out those people and bring them into these intervention groups or into the counseling arena.

One thing is for sure, without the employee, you won't have a Postal Service. You can't have a Service of only supervisors and managers. So, I think once postal employees are fully appreciated, that trust can begin building and we will have better communication and more work to resolution of this situation.

Thank you very much.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much. Let me first of all thank you for those extraordinarily thoughtful comments. They are clearly built on both experience and a sensitivity to the kind of environment we are talking about.

Miss COLLINS. Thank you.

Mr. SAWYER. And let me express similar thanks to the members of our panel for your efforts this morning, and more importantly, for your efforts day in and day out to help work our way toward the kinds of resolutions that you described. Thank you, gentlemen, very much.

Mr. SAWYER. Our second panel today will consist of Francis J. Connors, who is executive vice president of the National Association of Letter Carriers, who was unable to be with us last week, and so I am particularly grateful that we are able to accommodate his schedule this week.

Mr. Connors, if you would identify your colleague for the record and then proceed as you will. We look forward to your testimony.

**STATEMENT OF FRANCIS J. CONNERS, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS, AFL-CIO, ACCOMPANIED BY BOB LEVI, SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

Mr. CONNERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am accompanied today by Bob Levi, special assistant for legislative affairs for the National Association of letter carriers.

Chairman Sawyer, Chairwoman Collins, and members of the subcommittee, I am Francis J. Connors, executive vice president of the National Association of Letter Carriers.

On behalf of the 307,000 active and retired members of the NALC, I am pleased to share with you the Letter Carriers' perspective on protecting postal employees and postal customers from future instances of violence which may occur on postal property.

It should come as no surprise that violence has become widespread in our society. There was mention earlier of the yesterday's incident at Fort Knox. We only need to pick up a newspaper or watch a local news broadcast to experience the daily tragedies confronting our communities. Whether it was the wanton shooting of a 4-year-old youngster on a street in our Nation's capital or an unprovoked one-man siege on a San Diego health club, America's collective conscience has been assaulted.

Employment locations, including postal facilities, have become popular and visible venues for acts of violence within the last few years. Unfortunately, the American workplace has evolved into an occasional battleground.

Letter carriers throughout the Nation strive to protect not only their workplace but also their routes and their neighborhoods from the fury that has affected so many of their communities and places of employment.

We mourn the losses experienced by communities such as Edmond, Escondido, Royal Oak, and Dana Point. These are all locales where blood has been spilled on the postal workroom floor. Together with many of our companion employee organizations and postal management, the NALC is dedicated to protect postal workers and customers from the violence that has crept into our workplace.

Fortunately, despite the tremendous publicity which accompanies violent behavior in postal facilities, data analyzed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health seems to conclude that the Postal Service is still a comparatively safe place to work and transact business.

The Institute found that the Postal Service has a rate of occupational injury death of 2.2 per one 100,000 workers for the years 1980 through 1989. This frequency compares favorably with the rate of death for all U.S. workers for the same period, which was seven per 100,000.

The Institute also found that the rate of worker-related homicide was lower for USPS employees than for all other industries combined. However, the NALC believes that any violent behavior is too much.

As you all are well aware. Workplace tension and obsolete paramilitary attitude within the Service and increased workload with fewer employees, are all catalysts for violence.

The recent Postal Service reorganization, with the resultant loss of approximately 13,000 experienced letter carriers, has placed our members under extreme pressure due to overwork. Delivery routes have been consolidated, exposing our members to increased susceptibility to crime.

Postal management must understand that employees must not only be safe from at-risk fellow workers but also from the criminal element that preys on hard-working postal employees who deliver mail to every postal address in our Nation.

As one of the largest employers, the USPS should be a model employer and do a better job of protecting employees from the inhabitants of America's mean streets. For example, better surveillance of areas surrounding the postal workplace by USPS law enforcement officials would help to curtail criminal acts against postal personnel.

The NALC's participation in the National Committee on Violence and Behavior represents our commitment to enhancing workplace safety. This is one example of unions working with management that can help to design a safer, less stressful work environment.

One of the ways in which postal management may take a firm step toward reducing employee-management tensions which contribute to an atmosphere which may yield violent acts is to remedy

basic inequities in disciplining employees. Bargaining unit employees tend to be terminated, while supervisors and postmasters are promoted. That is not right, and that is not fair.

In addition such disparate treatment leads to violent situations caused by the promotion of incompetent management who do not have the training to diffuse potential catastrophe. At times, the Postal Service seems to subscribe to a variation of the Peter principle. Certain managers are promoted beyond their level of incompetence.

Competence should be the basis for promotion, and the same sanctions should apply to both rank-and-file workers and management for inappropriate conduct or unacceptable work.

In addition, time and time again I hear stories of postal workers threatening, harassing, and intimidating other postal employees, yet the Service does very little to remedy the situation and take corrective action against the guilty parties.

The Postal Service must do a much better job at rooting out abusive and dangerous postal workers whose actions should not be tolerated by any responsible employer. As a first step, the Service should offer assistance or counseling to the at-risk employee. However, at no time should the Postal Service place worker safety in jeopardy.

This brings me to my last point. The mental health and substance abuse benefits provided by the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program is inadequate to offer the necessary medical treatment that postal employees with emotional and mental health problems so desperately need. As a result, at-risk employees may receive inappropriate treatment or no treatment at all.

Therefore, the NALC applauds President Clinton's efforts to improve mental health coverage within the context of health care reform. More comprehensive mental health and substance abuse coverage will provide employee assistance program counselors with more realistic options and the essential tools needed for the treatments of postal employees who can benefit from appropriate medical treatment. We all know that such treatment of at-risk employees often can prevent violent behavior from ever surfacing at the workplace or at home.

The NALC pledges to continue our effort to reduce tensions within the Service and, as a result, alleviate the proximate causes of postal violence. Only through the collaborative efforts of labor and management can we ensure that societal violence will not infiltrate the sanctity of one Government facility that all Americans frequent.

Once again, I appreciate the opportunity to address these issues, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much, Mr. Connors. Your testimony is really quite thorough.

One of the questions that I asked of your colleagues in last week's hearing was the difficulty that inevitably arises when faced with the dilemma, the challenges, as it was called last week, of representing both an employee who is a target of threat and the employee who is perceived to pose a threat. Are we institutionally structured sufficiently to help overcome that dilemma, to respond to that challenge?



Mr. CONNERS. Well, I am not sure that we are. However, it is a challenge and something that we have to deal with on a case-by-case basis.

The way to alleviate having to make a hard choice during a difficult time would be to provide assistance to those people before reaching a crisis. I think that is our challenge.

Mr. SAWYER. It really comes down to a question that is broader in scope. Can you comment about the adequacy of procedures for reporting threats of violence, whether they come from within and on the workplace floor or from outside, and the ability to have those reports taken with the full measure of seriousness that they deserve?

Mr. CONNERS. Yes. When we receive reports from our members about a violent or a behavior problem on a workroom floor, we immediately refer that to our national business agent in the area. We then ask the business agent to look into it and make sure that it can be corrected. If it can't, then the NALC will look into it through our national intervention team on the national task force.

Mr. SAWYER. Is there a trusted way of engaging supervisory personnel early in that process, or is that a part of the dilemma?

Mr. CONNERS. Well, it is part of the dilemma in that people don't look at something in the same way. We had a situation a week or two ago where somebody complained about another employee continually cursing and swearing at other employees. The report was that this situation was happening every day.

It was looked into by management because they had also received this report. It was discovered that it did not happen every day, it was intermittent. So, now we are in the process of finding out the facts in the matter.

As you know, sometimes people look at things in different ways.

Mr. SAWYER. That leads me to, I guess, the last question I want to ask you this morning. We have heard in several of our hearings about the importance of not letting grievance and arbitration procedures drag on, that they tend to exacerbate whatever tensions may be inherent in the situation to begin with.

That makes some sense to me, but I also sit here and need to assure myself that the rights of employees and their supervisors are both protected and would not be lost in the process of streamlining. Can you comment just briefly on that dilemma?

Mr. CONNERS. Yes. By and large, the serious disciplinary actions have moved to the top of the list and are handled pretty well, as expeditiously as possible, and fairly.

One of the problems is that every once in a while there are cases that fall through the cracks, or are delayed for one reason or another. Of course one of those was in the Royal Oak situation. That lasted a lot longer than it should have. Whether it could have prevented the tragedy, I don't know. But, certainly that was too long a period of time to have someone stewing out there to see whether or not they were going to have their job.

But by and large, removal cases are handled in a pretty fair fashion.

Mr. SAWYER. Thank you very much.

Before I turn to Miss Collins, I have a another hearing at 11 o'clock that I need to be at. So, if it would be all right, I would like to turn the gavel over to her for the remainder of the hearing.

Let me just note for the record that our colleague, Mr. Petri from Wisconsin, was here for part of the hearing. It was in the midst of the testimony of the previous panel, and while he also faced a difficult schedule this morning, I wanted to make sure that his presence was noted today.

Thank you very much, very much, for your testimony this morning. It was very effective and useful.

Mr. CONNERS. Thank you.

Miss COLLINS [presiding]. Thank you. I am known to have a very quick gavel, you know.

Mr. Connors, thank you very much for participating in this hearing.

I think you are absolutely right, the letter carriers are very much at risk on the mean streets of America, going places that census takers have stopped going to, but the mail still goes through, and I think that many of the American people don't recognize and appreciate the job that is done by the letter carriers somehow, or maybe we need a PR campaign so that things that the public take for granted they would begin to recognize the true commitment that the letter carriers have for getting the mail through.

I am going to turn my questions over to you in writing also, but there is one thing—well, there are two questions that I would like to ask you right now. Has the union, NALC, attempted to deal with the issue of disparity in discipline that you mentioned in its national contract, or has the issue been raised with the Postal Service at some other time?

Mr. CONNERS. The issue has been raised many times with the Postal Service and especially in the meetings of the National Task Force on Violence and Behavior, because that is where it is mostly brought to our attention.

Miss COLLINS. What has been the response?

Mr. CONNERS. Well, it is mixed. They say that that doesn't happen and that certainly it shouldn't happen, but it continues to happen.

Miss COLLINS. Do you document it?

Mr. CONNERS. Yes, we have situations where—

Miss COLLINS. I mean you have documented it. So then how can they say it doesn't happen? They just say it?

Mr. CONNERS. They say it, and they say they have taken measures against managers. However, when we commit what they consider to be a threat, in many cases we are fired. When the threat comes from management, it is our understanding, and perception, that the people aren't fired; sometimes they are moved, sometimes they are disciplined in a way in which we are not aware. However, they don't seem to be fired, as are letter carriers.

Miss COLLINS. Mr. Connors, I would like to see some of your documentation, and I will pose the question to the Postal Service and see if I can get an answer or at least a better response. I will also attempt to meet with them.

Mr. CONNERS. OK.

Miss COLLINS. But if I have the documentation, it will be much easier for me to put it on the table.

Mr. CONNERS. Right.

Miss COLLINS. My feeling is that you are probably correct, but, you know, it is my feeling from observation; I don't have any statistics or facts on it.

Finally, last week the American Postal Workers were here, and they testified that they started their own committee on postal violence, the APWU. I wonder, do you work with them at all on the issue of postal violence?

Mr. CONNERS. No. We are committed to the three organizations, that previously testified this morning and the Postal Service, as well as the mail handlers, and the postal police, and others who form the Task Force on Violence and Behavior.

Miss COLLINS. You think it is working?

Mr. CONNERS. Well, I think it is important that all of those groups are together, because I don't think we can solve the problem by ourself.

Miss COLLINS. OK.

Well, I am not going—actually I only have one other question, but I want to thank you very much for coming. I think that these hearings have been very productive in bringing the participants to the table. It is just important that we put everything out on the table and really deal with the situation for the safety of all concerned, and I believe we can do it. I believe we can do it, you know, once we make it a priority and really deal with it.

I thank you very much for your testimony and, panel number one, for your testimony, and this hearing will be concluded.

[Whereupon, at 11:02 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

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